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Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

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Friday, 28 October 2011, 9 a.m.

New York

President:	Mrs. Ogwu	(Nigeria)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Barbalić
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	China	Mr. Li Baodong
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Briens
	Gabon	Mr. Messone
	Germany	Mr. Berger
	India	Mrs. Chowdhary
	Lebanon	Mr. Salam
	Portugal	Mr. Moraes Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Karev
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Sir Mark Lyall Grant
	United States of America	Mrs. DiCarlo

Agenda

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2011/598*)

Letter dated 20 October 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2011/654)

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The meeting was called to order at 9.10 a.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

Women and peace and security

Report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2011/598*)

Letter dated 20 October 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (S/2011/654)

The President: In accordance with rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite the representatives of Angola, Argentina, Armenia, Australia, Austria, Bangladesh, Burundi, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Estonia, Finland, Indonesia, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kenya, Kyrgyzstan, Liberia, Liechtenstein, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Maldives, Morocco, Nepal, the Netherlands, Peru, the Republic of Korea, Senegal, Solomon Islands, Spain, the Sudan, Switzerland, Timor-Leste, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine and Vanuatu to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Under-Secretary-General for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Lazarous Kapambwe, President of the Economic and Social Council, to participate in this meeting.

In accordance with rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite Ms. Orzala Ashraf Nemat, representing the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, to participate in this meeting.

Under rule 39 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I invite His Excellency Mr. Thomas Mayr-Harting, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations, to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/598*, which contains the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security.

I also wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/654, which contains a letter dated 20 October 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General.

I welcome the presence of the Secretary-General, His Excellency Mr. Ban Ki-moon, and I give him the floor.

The Secretary-General: I commend Nigeria's choice of theme for today's debate, and I thank the President and Council members for agreeing to start earlier than usual to allow me to participate in this very important meeting.

The Security Council has emphasized repeatedly that involving women in conflict prevention and mediation is essential to building peace and reinforcing the foundations of democracy. This understanding was further acknowledged by the award of this year's Nobel Peace Prize to three extraordinary women peacemakers: President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Leymah Gbowee of Liberia; and Tawakkul Karman of Yemen. Their examples should inspire us to intensify our efforts to ensure women's full participation in all conflict prevention and resolution processes.

The Executive Director of UN-Women, Michelle Bachelet, will present my report on women, peace and security (S/2011/598*). As it indicates, women's participation remains low both in official and observer roles. This has to change, and I am determined that the United Nations system should lead by example.

In the past year, the number of women leading United Nations peacekeeping, political and peacebuilding missions has risen from six to 33 missions. My Special Representatives for Children and Armed Conflict and on Sexual Violence in Conflict are female, too. The Department of Political Affairs has increased the proportion of women candidates in its roster of senior mediators, team members and thematic experts to 35 per cent. A gender and inclusion expert is now serving in the United Nations Standby Team of Mediation Experts, and guidance will soon be issued for UN mediators addressing conflict-related sexual violence in ceasefire and peace agreements.

In the field, our teams are supporting women so they can engage in peacebuilding and conflict prevention, management and reconciliation in West Africa, Central Asia, the Balkans and South-East Asia. In Afghanistan, our Mission continues to engage with women's networks struggling against the abuse of women. We have also worked for the inclusion of women in the High Peace Council and in provincial peace councils. In Darfur, our Mission worked to ensure that more than 30 per cent of civil society representatives at the Doha peace negotiations were women. The United Nations Mission in the Republic of South Sudan is working with women parliamentarians in that country to enhance the role of women in conflict resolution, mitigation and peacebuilding.

In turn, I encourage Member States to increase the number of women in senior positions in international and regional conflict prevention. This means more women in senior governance roles, at the top of security institutions, and serving as diplomats. The next few months will see international meetings to support recovery in South Sudan, Somalia, Afghanistan and Libya. Let us use these opportunities to ensure that women's voices are heard.

As members of the Council know, I have presented a strategic framework to accelerate the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). It has targets and indicators for 2014 and 2020, and a baseline is being assembled to track progress and ensure accountability. I will welcome further improvements in the flow of information to the Council on progress in the situation of women in armed conflict. I also urge Member States to do more — including through additional funding — to implement the strategic framework's priorities and protect the rights of women and girls.

While there has undoubtedly been progress, I am deeply concerned about the persistence of serious abuses of women's rights. Last year at this time, I lamented the mass rapes that had occurred in Walikale, in the east of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. My alarm has not diminished. We must respond swiftly and effectively to such crimes wherever and whenever they occur. We must hold those responsible to account. Let us make women's dignity, safety and needs a priority.

I am committed to working with the Council to ensure the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and its related resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and 1960 (2010). I look forward to hearing members' proposals for bringing women from the margins of conflict prevention and mediation into the centre, where they belong.

The President: I thank the Secretary-General for his statement.

I give the floor to Ms. Bachelet.

Ms. Bachelet: It is an honour to address the Security Council and present the report of the Secretary-General on women and peace and security (S/2011/598*). I thank the Secretary-General for his leadership. While noting progress, the report stresses that much more can and must be done to fully engage women in conflict resolution and mediation. As the Security Council has emphasized, women's full participation in peacemaking is fundamental to building peace and security.

This awareness was underlined by the award of this year's Nobel Peace Prize to three women champions of peace, justice and democracy: President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia, her compatriot Leymah Gbowee, and Tawakkul Karman of Yemen. This is the first time that the Nobel Committee's citation included a direct reference to resolution 1325 (2000).

For each of the three Nobel Peace Prize winners this year, there are thousands of women around the world who persist in their pursuit of peace in spite of massive obstacles. Their commitment to non-violence and equality can stimulate breakthroughs where there is resistance to change. It is our job — particularly in view of the theme of this open debate today — to make sure that doors are opened to women for conflict prevention and mediation.

The report of the Secretary-General summarizes progress in implementing resolution 1325 (2000) over the past year in the four main areas of prevention, participation, protection, and relief and recovery. A strategic framework is included in this year's report to guide the United Nations implementation of the resolution up to 2020 and to strengthen United Nations system accountability.

In the area of conflict prevention, improvements have been registered in coordinated efforts to prevent conflict-related human rights abuses of women, from increased prosecutions and improved information about

security threats to community vigilance efforts. During the past year, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict has displayed determination to tackle impunity and prevent future attacks on women. The rise in prosecutions for conflict-related sexual violence is having a deterrent effect. To make further progress, the report notes that the fight against impunity must be paired with efforts to empower women so they can sustain the demand for accountability. There is also a need to strengthen the involvement of women and the inclusion of gender perspectives in early-warning and community conflict-prevention systems to make them more effective.

In the area of women's participation in conflict prevention, conflict resolution and recovery, the report calls for further action to open doors and provide seats to women in official and observer roles. As the topic of this year's open debate addresses women's participation in mediation, it is crucial that we consider what can be done concretely about the low numbers of women in mediation. The report calls for specific measures and financial incentives by Member States to include women in official delegations. Special envoys and mediators are encouraged to meet with women leaders and peace activists at the earliest possible moment in mediation processes, to hold regular consultations with women's civil society groups as standard operating procedure and to share information from those meetings with the Security Council and the Secretary-General.

In the area of protection, the report shows a mixed picture. Missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Haiti and Darfur show that protection patrols and community policing within and around camps, as well as escorts for women during livelihood activities such as gathering water and firewood, have helped deter sexual and gender-based violence. Against examples of good practice, however, there are continuing reports of human rights violations that reinforce the need to ensure respect for international legal obligations and provide protection to women against atrocities.

Finally, in the area of relief and recovery, the report notes improved awareness and responses to the needs of women and girls in past conflict-needs assessments, basic service design and delivery, the provision of temporary employment, and transitional justice programmes, including reparations programmes. There are good examples to build on, such as the cooperation between the United Nations Development Programme and the World Food Programme in Haiti, which created temporary employment for 240,000 Haitians, 40 per cent of them women.

Overall, the United Nations system is working to increase post-conflict spending on women's empowerment and gender equality to a minimum of 15 per cent of post-conflict financing within a few years. The Peacebuilding Fund recently issued a $5 million gender-promotion initiative and a call for proposals to support women's participation in peacebuilding, and he committed to doubling its spending on women's empowerment by 2012.

The report points out that a total of 32 countries have produced national action plans on resolution 1325 (2000), with another 12 anticipating the finalization of their plans soon. Several regional organizations have adopted policies on women, peace and security. At the United Nations, a set of tools have been developed to better equip the United Nations system to ensure that women engage in conflict prevention, resolution and recovery, and that stronger protection environments are built for women. UN-Women coordinated the production of the strategic framework, which was requested by the Security Council last year to guide the United Nations implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in the next decade. It includes a monitoring system and targets for effective coordination and more concentrated impact.

During the past year, focus has been placed on advancing coordination, accountability and coherence in the implementation of women and peace and security commitments through joint initiatives within the United Nations system. I would like to acknowledge and thank the Department of Political Affairs for its collaboration on gender and mediation. I also thank the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict for their collaboration on early-warning and pre-deployment troop training on the detection and prevention of sexual violence in armed conflict.

Work is currently under way with the United Nations Development Programme and the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights to improve attention to crimes against women in transitional justice systems, as well as with the Peacebuilding

Support Office to strengthen responses to women's needs in post-conflict peacebuilding. In regions around the world, recent "open day" country-level meetings between women in civil society and senior United Nations leaders have generated increased women's participation and contribution to peace and security.

Looking forward, the report concludes with recommendations for the Security Council's consideration, addressing three broad areas. First, there is a call for targeted actions in situations on the Council's agenda to build women's engagement in conflict resolution and recovery. Secondly, there is a need to improve the information the Council receives on women and peace and security. Thirdly, there is a need for specific catalytic measures by Member States.

I would like to note the active role that the Council has played in the last year. All three of the Council's missions in 2010 included consultations with women's groups. Recently, the Council produced new or renewed mission mandates that call for specific actions to ensure women's inclusion. The report encourages more systematic actions of that type. It also suggests that more such briefings as the one I provided in April would be of value to the Council in furthering the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Finally, Member States are urged to develop national planning instruments to advance women and peace and security commitments, to devise practical measures to increase the numbers of women in official and observer roles in conflict resolution processes, to increase the number of women in the security, governance and foreign service sectors, and to invest in women's post-conflict recovery and justice needs and reparations.

In conclusion, I would like to quote a representative of Afghan civil society who spoke at the London Conference on Afghanistan last year. She said:

> "women's engagement is not an optional extra component of stabilization and recovery; it is a critical precursor to success. Women's empowerment will enable you to deliver long-term stability, democratization and development".

If women's participation is essential, not optional, why is it often the missing ingredient in conflict prevention and mediation? As we go forward, we need determined leadership by all of us — the Security Council, Member States, civil society and the United Nations — to fully engage women in mediation and conflict prevention. This will advance peace and security and deepen democracy around the world.

The President: I thank Ms. Bachelet for her briefing.

I now give the floor to Mr. Kapambwe.

Mr. Kapambwe (Zambia), President of the Economic and Social Council: Thank you, Madam President for inviting me to address the Security Council, in my capacity as President of the Economic and Social Council, on the important issue of women, peace and security.

The Security Council's consideration of the subject of women, peace and security 11 years ago, which resulted in the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), was a landmark event in the recognition of importance of women's equal participation and full involvement in the maintenance of peace and security, including in conflict management, peacekeeping and post-conflict peacebuilding. The engagement of the Security Council on this issue built on the work done by the Economic and Social Council on gender equality and women's empowerment. I wish to believe that the Economic and Social Council was catalytic in that regard by virtue of its historic adoption of agreed conclusions on gender mainstreaming at its substantive session in 1997 and of the annual follow-up that it has carried out on the matter since then.

Those of us from the continent, which has suffered so many conflicts, know and understand the terrible impact of war. We also know that women and girls suffer disproportionately — indirectly and directly — as victims of violent conflict.

We also know that unless women are key players in rebuilding their societies, including by playing key roles in negotiating peace agreements, national reconciliation and in relaunching economic recovery, such efforts will not succeed. We also know that gender equality and the empowerment of women are cross-cutting issues for all development policies and, indeed, should be a cornerstone for all policies, including for peacemaking and peacebuilding.

The Economic and Social Council devoted its 2010 annual ministerial review last year to the internationally agreed development goals and commitments in regard to gender equality and the empowerment of women. The ministerial declaration adopted by the Council broke new ground in that, for

the first time, an intergovernmental body highlighted a number of cross-cutting issues where action was expected to positively enhance gender-related goals. These cross-cutting issues are also relevant with regard to the role of women in contributing to peacemaking and peacebuilding.

I wish briefly to highlight some of these cross-cutting issues, which are of particular relevance to this debate and call for a common approach by the United Nations system at the normative, programmatic and operational levels.

First, discriminatory attitudes and gender stereotypes, including in the education sector, must be ended. This implies a strong advocacy role by the United Nations for women's human rights and the elaboration of media strategies and tools for outreach, in particular when these rights are violated or threatened to be violated.

Secondly, all forms of discrimination and violence against women and girls must be ended. The United Nations system is called upon to develop a more coherent response to this phenomenon, including through the Secretary-General's campaign on violence against women. Special attention should also be paid to the recognition that sexual violence can be both a cause and a consequence of HIV/AIDS, as shown in conflict settings where both are endemic.

Thirdly, the full empowerment of women must be promoted, including equal participation of women and men in decision-making. While the need to involve women in peace processes has been extensively addressed, progress is needed in all spheres of society in order to strengthen the potential of women as agents of change and their ongoing contribution to conflict prevention.

Fourthly, it is important to address the critical role of men and boys as an important component of gender policies. Special initiatives should be taken to mobilize civil-society organizations which are male-led or working on male engagement for gender equity, especially in conflict-prone countries, where women and girls pay a terrible price.

Fifthly, promoting the full integration of women into the formal economy is also particularly relevant in post-conflict recovery and peacebuilding contexts, where new opportunities should be offered to women as part of the dividends of peace and as a way to consolidate social peace. The development and security pillars of the Organization are strongly interconnected in this respect.

Sixthly, ensuring that women and girls with disabilities are not subject to multiple and aggravated forms of discrimination. Women with war-related disabilities deserve particular attention and support. The coordinated involvement of humanitarian, development, health and protection actors should be promoted by our intergovernmental bodies in order to target this category of women and girls.

By highlighting these cross-cutting issues, I have tried to propose a method for action through which the United Nations can act more coherently and our work can have increased impact. If we — the General Assembly, the Security Council, the Economic and Social Council and its Commission on the Status of Women, as well as the Peacebuilding Commission — act in concert and in an integrated way, we can help to ensure progress in the many areas highlighted by the indicators to track the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) highlighted in the Secretary-General's report (S/2011/598*) that is before us today.

As my predecessor suggested last year at the tenth-anniversary celebration of the adoption of that important resolution, the Economic and Social Council could do its part by ensuring follow-up and monitoring of the indicators developed by its Statistical Commission on violence against women. Given its strong experience in reviewing the achievement of development objectives, particularly the Millennium Development Goals, the Council could engage in this task with real know-how and institutional backup from the United Nations system at large and by its subsidiary bodies.

The members of the Economic and Social Council also commit to providing the requisite guidance to the agencies, funds and programmes on implementing the actions required to implement resolution 1325 (2000), particularly those linked to the coordination of humanitarian action, the transition from relief to development and the promotion of the active role and participation of women in sustainable development.

The President: I thank Mr. Kapambwe for his briefing.

I now give the floor to Ms. Orzala Ashraf Nemat.

Ms. Nemat: I would like to thank the representative of Nigeria, the President of the Security Council, for the invitation to speak here today. I have the honour of speaking on behalf of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, a coalition of international civil society organizations that advocates for the equal and full participation of women in all efforts to maintain international peace and security. Personally, as a long-time advocate for the rights of women in Afghanistan, I am delighted to sit at this high-level table.

As the Secretary-General has reported, we have seen some progress in the implementation of the women, peace and security agenda, particularly within the United Nations system. The establishment of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), once adequately funded, and with advice from women's human rights defenders, offers Governments and civil society new possibilities for effectively advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women. The increased number of references to women, peace and security in United Nations reports and mandate renewals by the Security Council are also most welcome. So, too, is the Security Council's adoption in December 2010 of resolution 1960 (2010) on women, peace and security, which focuses on strengthening the prevention of, and the response to, conflict-related sexual violence.

However, we also agree with the Secretary-General that implementation remains far from even. This is particularly true with respect to the implementation of the provisions contained in paragraph 1 of resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security, namely, the

> "increased representation of women at all decision-making levels in national, regional and international institutions and mechanisms for the prevention, management, and resolution of conflict".

The theme of this open debate is therefore particularly timely. As I know from experience in Afghanistan, women are crucial to all efforts to create and maintain peace and security, and there are examples from around the world — in Liberia, Kenya, Sierra Leone, Nepal, Yemen, Guatemala, Northern Ireland and in many others — that demonstrate that women can be effective leaders in conflict prevention and in all aspects of peacebuilding. Nevertheless, we continue to face political and practical barriers to exercising our right to full and meaningful participation in every peace process. It is particularly frustrating that we are repeatedly marginalized, despite the many national and international commitments already made to including us at the decision-making table.

There are three urgent steps that the United Nations and its Member States must take: increasing women's role in the prevention of conflict; fulfilling women's right to participate fully in decisions regarding the future of their countries, including in peace processes; and ensuring that women's equal rights are fundamental to peace accords and all political settlements.

As to the first step — increasing women's role in the prevention of conflict — the most effective way to ensure peace and security for all is, of course, by preventing conflict. Too often, however, national and international efforts to do so ignore or, worse, undermine the important work women are already doing in their communities to address the root causes of conflict.

In looking for ways to effectively prevent conflict, national and international authorities should ask us women what lessons we have already learned and what recommendations we have for addressing the root causes of conflict. And if we are to continue and increase our work in conflict prevention, we need the Council's support in ensuring our safety and in guaranteeing independent investigations into any attacks on us, the effective control of arms transfers and sustained funding for the development of our programmes.

Secondly, in fulfilling women's right to participate fully in decisions regarding the future of our countries, including in peace processes, it is vital that women in conflict-affected areas be fully able to exercise their equal right to shape their country's future. The United Nations and its Member States have repeatedly expressed a commitment to that principle. However, there has been little or no sense of urgency in seeing that through. A commitment to women's equal and full participation requires our immediate involvement in the drafting and negotiating of all peace agreements and in the reform of relevant political, security and justice institutions.

The next 12 months will see, for example, new elections in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, continuing political transition in the Middle East and North Africa, and ongoing efforts to bring peace to Afghanistan. In all such situations, we strongly urge the Council to support the full participation of women in constitutional and legislative reform, to support women political candidates and to provide safe environments for women to fully exercise their rights in electoral processes.

The development of women's leadership in peace processes must be promoted at the local, national and international levels. To ensure that the voices of the most marginalized are heard in those processes, the efforts of women's groups to strengthen the links between communities and negotiations at the national level require greater investment and protection.

There is an important connection between high-level political commitment and its translation to the field or local level. For example, in Afghanistan, when we asked for protection for women provincial candidates, central authorities immediately agreed to provide that protection. However, when the provincial women candidates approached the local authorities, the women and their security concerns were dismissed or mocked, and they were told that such protection would be a waste of resources.

Thirdly, as to ensuring that women's equal rights are fundamental to peace accords and all political settlements, it has been frustrating to see that the full recognition of all rights is still not consistently included in peace talks and accords, and there appears to be little sense of urgency to improve that. In too many cases, as was the case in the Sudan in 2005, even when women have been included in peace talks, their rights have been neglected in the accords.

Today's open debate is focused on the matter of women's security. When Afghan women are asked for their definition of security, we use the expression "*amnyat wamasuniat*", by which we mean a comprehensive feeling of safety in daily public and social life. The success of peace agreements must be gauged not just by the fact of their having been signed, but by real, measurable security improvements for women and for all members of the community.

Peace is a process, not an event. We look to Member States, including members of the Security Council, to ensure that women are consistently appointed as mediators and negotiators and to ensure that our rights are fundamental to peace processes and outcomes. We have seen the difference women make when they are involved in conflict prevention and resolution, highlighted most recently in the awarding of this year's Nobel Peace Prize to women from Liberia and Yemen for that work.

In conclusion, I would like emphasize that women, especially in conflict-affected situations, should not be considered victims; rather, we should be duly recognized as powerful agents of change.

The President: I thank Ms. Nemat for her statement.

I now give the floor to the members of the Security Council.

Sir Mark Lyall Grant (United Kingdom): Thank you, Madam President, for holding this important open debate on women, peace and security. I would like to thank Michelle Bachelet, Lazarous Kapambwe and Orzala Ashraf Nemat for their briefings this morning.

I would also particularly like to thank the Secretary-General for the personal interest that he has shown in this very important agenda item. Though we support the comprehensive draft presidential statement that will be adopted in this debate, I regret that because of the opposition of some, we were unable to unreservedly welcome the Secretary-General's report (S/2011/598*). The United Kingdom does, wholeheartedly, welcome that report.

Women have a central role in building stability in countries at risk of conflict. Despite our collective efforts, they remain underrepresented in peace processes, in work to detect early signs of conflict, and in mediation between warring parties. Some progress has been made, but it is not until the participation of women is included throughout the conflict cycle that a durable and sustainable peace can be assured.

The Council, of course, may not be the best model. With five female Permanent and Deputy Permanent Representatives leaving the Council at the end of this year, there may be only two female Permanent and Deputy Permanent Representatives around this table, both from the United States.

I have three points to make in today's debate. The first concerns support for the role of UN-Women and the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on

Sexual Violence in Conflict; the second addresses the need to do more on conflict prevention and early warning; and the third stresses the work that the United Kingdom has taken forward through our national action plan on women, peace and security.

Since taking up her position as Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Women, Michelle Bachelet has passionately and effectively promoted the women, peace and security agenda. Supported by Special Representatives Radhika Coomaraswamy and Margot Wallström, UN-Women plays a vital role coordinating wider international efforts to implement the full suite of United Nations resolutions on women, peace and security. We commend in particular, the efforts to improve systematic reporting of progress through the development of indicators and a strategic framework, including the strategic framework of United Nations Action against Sexual Violence in Conflict. In July, the United Kingdom pledged $16 million over a two-year period to UN-Women to support this important work.

We have a responsibility to use all the means available to the United Nations to prevent conflict or relapse into conflict. United Nations Member States must be prepared to invest early to support countries emerging from conflict and react rapidly should a crisis arise. We must also continue to encourage the development and deployment, at the invitation of Governments, of United Nations mediation specialists and special envoys. The United Kingdom welcomes the Secretary-General's call to increase the number of senior female mediators.

I would like now to say a word on national action plans. The United Kingdom believes that national action plans provide an important opportunity for Member States to make their own commitments to reducing the impact of conflict on women and girls and to promoting their inclusion in conflict resolution. Over the past year, the United Kingdom has supported global efforts to implement resolution 1325 (2000). In Afghanistan, the United Kingdom has funded a full range of measures undertaken by the Criminal Justice Task Force to minimize gender-related barriers to working in a high-profile law enforcement environment. We also supported the efforts of the Government of Nepal to develop its own national action plan to generate, among many other things, work to provide support for women and girls who have been the victims of sexual violence. We encourage more countries to develop national action plans in order to strengthen the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and associated resolutions.

The Arab Spring has shown that threats to security, and to women and girls in particular, are changing constantly. In our work on women and peace and security, we must be flexible enough to respond to new threats and challenges as they emerge. There are sweeping and positive social and economic trends at work. The Council needs to show that we are responsive to those trends. On this as on other issues, we should demonstrate that we are on the right side of history. In particular, we must ensure that governing structures that emerge in the aftermath of conflict do not undermine women's roles and participation in society, and that the same opportunities are available to men and women.

The United Kingdom believes that women's inclusion in political settlements and peace processes, the protection of women and girls in situations of armed violence, and women's access to security and justice are essential building blocks for more peaceful and stable societies.

In a year when the Nobel Peace Prize was awarded to three impressive women, we share the hope of the Norwegian Nobel Committee that together we can realize the great potential for democracy and peace that women represent.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): I thank the Secretary-General for his remarks and for his report (S/2011/598*). I also warmly welcome to the Council Ambassador Lazarous Kapambwe, President of the Economic and Social Council, and Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director of UN-Women, and thank them for their briefings. Let me also thank the representative of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security for her intervention.

The women and peace and security agenda has been a catalyst for greater civil society engagement with the Council. This has enriched our work, giving us access to new perspectives and information. In all societies, there are real obstacles to women's political participation. Even in countries that have championed women's rights for decades, insidious barriers to true equality persist. Today we gather to consider how to advance further towards women's full engagement in conflict resolution and mediation.

The issue of women's participation in peace talks and other conflict-related negotiations certainly contains more than an element of justice. It is also an issue of effectiveness, which has a direct impact on the success of conflict resolution and mediation efforts. Women can bring to the table unique perspectives on issues such as impunity, accountability, and justice. If these perspectives are addressed in negotiations, the chance of achieving a sustainable peace will be much greater.

Brazil is encouraged by the progress made in taking forward the indicators on women and peace and security. We underline the importance of their close adherence to the letter of the relevant Security Council resolutions. Indicators, however, are not an end in themselves. They help us to gain a better understanding of the situations and to assess progress made towards our goals. In that context, we welcome and support the strategic framework that the Secretary-General has presented to guide the United Nations implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Last month, during the general debate and at an event on women's political participation, President Dilma Rousseff made it clear that the empowerment of women is high on Brazil's agenda. We have enacted advanced legislation on the protection of women, established specialized police stations for women's issues, and put women at the centre of our Bolsa Familia cash transfer programme. These are valuable experiences that we are ready to share with other countries, including those emerging from conflict.

Brazil is deeply engaged in cooperation activities with a number of countries emerging from conflict. In Brazil, the participation of women in the decision-making processes that deal with those issues has been steadily increasing, in keeping with the broad trend observed in Brazilian politics more generally, both in the executive and legislative branches. Today, nearly a third of the ministers in President Dilma's Cabinet are women, including many of those charged with core Government responsibilities. Women have also moved to the forefront of Brazilian diplomacy, occupying more and higher-level postings in our foreign service.

I would like to conclude by stressing a crucial point. The Council's support to empowering women in conflict and post-conflict situations is very important. However, it cannot stand on its own. The effective and sustainable political participation of women depends on social inclusion and economic opportunity. The work of the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and UN-Women in this regard requires our full support if we are to achieve the goals of the women and peace and security agenda.

Mr. Sangqu (South Africa): My delegation would like to express its sincere appreciation to the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General Michelle Bachelet, Ambassador Lazarous Kapambwe in his capacity as President of the Economic and Social Council, and Ms. Nemat, speaking on behalf of the NGO Working Group On Women, Peace and Security, for their statements. We also appreciate the presence of the Deputy Secretary-General in this debate.

South Africa welcomes the convening of this important meeting. The adoption of the historic resolution 1325 (2000) 11 years ago was a significant milestone in the recognition of the role that women can play in the maintenance of international peace and security, particularly in decision-making processes relating to conflict prevention and resolution. In light of that achievement, South Africa is encouraged by the various frameworks that have been created to ensure the implementation of that resolution, in particular the creation of UN-Women under the leadership of Ms. Michele Bachelet.

Those positive developments are pivotal for advancing the agenda of women, peace and security. It will allow for this important issue to be consistently placed at the top of the agenda of the United Nations system, and lead to increased coordination in policy programming for women and girls within the United Nations system.

Indeed, inroads have been made in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), as highlighted in the Secretary-General's report (S/2011/598*). However, let us be clear that gaps remain in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), as well as glaring disparities pertaining to the role of women in preventive diplomacy, formal peace processes and mediation. We therefore welcome the institutional and policy frameworks elaborated in the Secretary-General's report, in particular his seven-point action plan for gender-responsive peacebuilding, which seeks to establish standard operating procedures for gender issues in the United Nations, conflict resolution and peacebuilding architecture.

We further welcome the practical recommendations and the strategic results framework outlined in the Secretary-General's report, which constitute a concrete proposal to include women in conflict prevention and mediation. In particular, we wish to highlight the importance of nominating women to lead negotiation processes and increasing the number of women in the foreign services and security establishments.

Equally, the proposal to increase the number of women police and troops in United Nations missions is highly desirable in addressing the specific needs of women in conflict and post-conflict countries.

In that regard, South Africa is among the States with the highest representation of women across all spheres of Government. Women are also at the helm of ministries in the fields of international relations, cooperation and defence. In the area of peacekeeping, we have deployed gender mainstreaming officers in positions of command in peacekeeping missions to ensure that issues related to women are addressed. In addition, we are one of the top three troop-contributing countries with the largest contingent of women in peacekeeping missions.

In the recent past, South African women held the position of Deputy Police Commissioner in the African Union-United Nations Hybrid Operation in Darfur. We believe that the presence of women in peacekeeping missions positively benefits local women and girls, including other vulnerable groups in countries in, and emerging from, conflict.

Based on its past experience, South Africa is conscious of the centrality of women as peacemakers and facilitators in political processes and peacebuilding initiatives, particularly at the grass-roots level. Women at all levels of society have a role to play in conflict prevention and peacebuilding as agents of change. In that regard, South African Women in Dialogue has been actively engaged with women's organizations in countries such as Burundi, the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Sudan in sharing experiences and lessons learned with women in States emerging from conflict.

South Africa continues to contribute to popularizing the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) through structures such as the Southern African Development Community, the African Union and the Pan-African Women's Organization. To that end, South Africa recently held the Progressive Women's Movement of South Africa Summit on Women, Peace and Security in May.

Indeed, in congratulating the three outstanding women who were jointly awarded the Nobel Peace Prize this year, President Johnson-Sirleaf of Liberia, her compatriot Ms. Leymah Gbowee and Ms. Tawakkul Karman of Yemen, President Jacob Zuma underscored the important contribution that women continue to play in their ongoing struggle for women's rights, dignity, peace and development all over the world. The vast majority of women are not involved in creating wars, but they remain the primary victims of war and conflict. Long after the guns have ceased blazing, their children and families continue to suffer the devastating effects of the aftermath of conflict. Women are the ones left to pick up the pieces and to rebuild families and their communities.

Women also suffer disproportionately from poverty. An important dimension in advancing peace and preventing conflict is to ensure greater and more equitable economic justice and development. Despite advances in positioning women to assume leadership roles in conflict prevention and mediation, those advances will be meaningless if the root causes of conflict, which are by and large developmental in nature, are not sufficiently addressed.

In conclusion, as members of the Security Council, we should encourage the incorporation of a gender perspective of preventative diplomacy initiatives in our mandate renewals. That could be achieved, first, through the effective utilization of women as mediators, including through the good offices of the Secretary-General; secondly, by increasing the number of women Special Representatives, thirdly, by making the utmost use of the gender expertise resident in UN-Women; and fourthly, by incorporating the gender perspective in the work of Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa.

Finally, South Africa welcomes the adoption of the draft presidential statement before us.

Mrs. Chowdhary (India): At the outset, I would like to thank you, Madam President, for organizing this open debate on the important theme of "Women's participation and role in conflict prevention and mediation" as part of our ongoing deliberations on women and peace and security.

We have before us the report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/598*), and have been briefed by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Executive Director of UN-Women Ms. Michelle Bachelet, President of the Economic and Social Council Ambassador Lazarous Kapambwe, and non-governmental organization representative Ms. Orzala Ashraf Nemat. I would like to thank them for their comprehensive briefings.

It also needs to be recognized that the issue of women and peace and security has several cross-cutting and multidimensional implications. Therefore, the need for discussing such issues in the universal forum, the General Assembly, cannot be overemphasized.

Gender equality and the empowerment of women remain the key focus area of social development and distributive justice globally. Empowering women politically, economically, educationally and legally has been a major objective of the Government of India. We are proud of the fact that India gave women equal voting rights more than 60 years ago, at the time of our independence. In 1992, we amended our Constitution and reserved 33 per cent of the seats for women in local- and district-level governance institutions and bodies. That was subsequently raised to 50 per cent in 2009. Currently, we have more than 1.5 million elected women representatives in local bodies. That is the biggest mobilization of women worldwide in politics at the local Government and the rural and district levels.

The five-year plans formulated by the Government of India for economic development recognize the important role of women as agents of sustained socio-economic growth and change by incorporating proposals on gender empowerment. Women's empowerment is essential to promote overall sustainable development. That is also true in conflict situations. We believe that the participation of women in all stages of the peace process — conflict prevention, peace negotiations, peacekeeping and post-conflict reconstruction — is essential for lasting peace and security.

Key aspects of post-conflict reconstruction, such as economic recovery, social cohesion and political legitimacy, all require the active engagement of women. Resolution 1325 (2000) was a seminal piece of international legislation in our efforts on women and peace and security. The United Nations, Member States and civil society have made steady and noticeable efforts in implementing the resolution. However, the results remain mixed, with important gaps remaining in fully realizing its provisions.

The United Nations system has come up with a comprehensive set of indicators to assess progress in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We have certainly taken note of those indicators. We believe that such indicators and benchmarks need to be further discussed and conceptually developed as part of broader intergovernmental consultations before their eventual adoption. One must also be cognizant of the difficulty in obtaining credible and verifiable data, in particular from conflict situations.

The United Nations is being asked to do more with regard to women and peace and security, including through the mainstreaming of the gender perspective in the United Nations system and United Nations peacekeeping missions. We commend the work of the Secretary-General in mainstreaming the gender perspective in the United Nations recruitment process. The number of women at the senior decision-making level and the participation of women in mission planning, peacekeeping operations and peacebuilding efforts have increased. Nonetheless, the numbers still remain very low.

As the Secretary-General's report itself points out, the United Nations presence in conflict and post-conflict situations — field missions and country teams — must achieve greater coherence and coordination in addressing women and peace and security issues, including through the timely provision of targeted gender expertise.

The appointments of a Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and a number of women special envoys are also positive developments. It is important that special representatives work in a coordinated manner among themselves and with other United Nations bodies. That is not only to ensure optimal utilization of resources and avoidance of duplication but also to promote greater coherence.

We welcome the efforts of UN-Women to significantly boost United Nations action on the empowerment of women and gender equality, including in the area of women and peace and security. Its efforts need to be supported by all in the United Nations system and by the Member States. The Council, for its

part, must make available the resources that are required to implement those mandates.

We agree with all those who support increased deployment of female military and police personnel in United Nations peacekeeping operations and the provision to all military and police personnel of appropriate training to effectively discharge their responsibilities. India was the first country to deploy an all-female peacekeeping unit, 100 troops in Liberia in 2007. We have offered to contribute more such units. India is the largest contributor of troops in United Nations history. We are very proud of the exemplary record of our peacekeepers, both men and women, in the protection of women, children and the needy in conflict situations.

The promotion and protection of the human rights of women and girls in armed conflict continue to pose a pressing challenge. The Council has in previous resolutions recognized the specific vulnerability of women during conflicts and that they bear a disproportionate brunt of armed conflict, even though they are in most cases not directly engaged in combat. There should be zero tolerance for gender-based violence, and incidents of gender-based violence must be unequivocally condemned. All cases of gender-based violence in an armed conflict, whether perpetrated by parties to the conflict, peacekeeping personnel or humanitarian actors, must be promptly investigated and the perpetrators prosecuted.

The international community must take all necessary steps to ensure the security of women and children. We also see civil society and local communities as valued partners in this endeavour, and we look forward to working with them to take this agenda forward.

In conclusion, let me reaffirm India's commitment to positively contributing to United Nations efforts in protecting vulnerable sectors, including women and children, in conflict and post-conflict situations. I also call upon the international community to enhance cooperation by providing resources and sharing experience and expertise to build capacity in this area.

Mr. Messone (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): Madam President, my delegation welcomes your presiding over our work as the Security Council holds its annual thematic debate on women and peace and security. We commend your initiative in organizing it.

We thank the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General Bachelet, Ambassador Lazarous Kapambwe of the Economic and Social Council, and Ms. Nemat for their briefings. We welcome the presence of Ms. Chowdhary, of the Parliament of India.

As members know, two years ago Gabon underwent a political transition that was outstandingly led by two women, one the President of the Senate and the other the President of the Constitutional Court. When Ali Bongo Ondimba, President of the Gabonese Republic, addressed the sixty-sixth session of the General Assembly, he recalled the high priority Gabon gives to the effective participation of women in mediation and conflict prevention (see A/66/PV.16).

A few weeks ago, we welcomed the awarding of the Nobel Peace Prize to three women: Mrs. Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, President of Liberia, Ms. Leymah Gbowee, Liberian activist, and Ms. Tawakkul Karman, Yemeni activist. This year, those three women clearly embody the very issue we are discussing.

The Security Council reached a consensus more than a decade ago in recognizing, through the adoption on 31 October 2000 of resolution 1325 (2000), the decisive role of women in the prevention and resolution of conflicts and in peacebuilding. In its presidential statement S/PRST/2001/31, the Council made commitments on this issue. In doing so, it established that without the effective participation of women in peace processes, our efforts to maintain international peace and security would always be incomplete and would yield diminished results.

In the matter under discussion, three areas seem to us essential for coherent and fruitful action. First, we must strengthen our normative framework at the international, regional and national levels. Secondly, we must work to strengthen capacities, especially through peacekeeping missions and in the post-conflict peacebuilding and reconstruction phase. Finally, we must establish a stronger link between the protection of women and children and the prevention of armed conflict by focusing on the root causes of those conflicts.

We note that much progress has been made in developing a normative framework to strengthen the action of the international community. Resolution 1325 (2000) is the foundation of that structure. That foundation has expanded and now forms a body with resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009), 1889 (2009) and

1960 (2010). Together, those resolutions offer the Council and the international community as a whole a vast body of values and principles that can guide our action in matters of participation, protection, capacity-building and the fight against impunity, but also in the rehabilitation and reintegration of women in society in the context of peacebuilding.

We welcome the fact that a majority of Security Council resolutions focus particular attention on the question of women's effective participation. That fortunate trend should be pursued so that it becomes an essential part of the work of the Council and of the United Nations.

In light of the persistent realities in conflict situations, especially the continuing violence against women, we need a renewed commitment on the part of all actors, first and foremost States, but also regional governmental institutions and civil society organizations. We must be more vigilant about putting into practice the relevant recommendations in the Council resolutions. We must also be more mindful of the Secretary-General's recommendations aimed at greater integration of women in prevention, mediation and peacebuilding in post-conflict situations.

The obstacles to women taking a broader role are often cultural in nature. We believe that this aspect can be addressed in the Secretary-General's report devoted to the high-level meeting scheduled for 2015. We also encourage UN-Women to work more on overcoming cultural obstacles that can hinder peacebuilding. Greater action by UN-Women, particularly in Africa, can be decisive. From that point of view, a crucial task is finalizing work on the indicators likely to allow us to assess progress but also, above all, measure the impediments to our action. We would like to welcome here the efforts made by the Secretary-General to increase the number of women who hold positions of senior responsibility in coordinating the Organization's efforts to promote peace and security, both at the Secretariat and in peacekeeping missions.

An important aspect of our debate is the link between preventive diplomacy and the Council's initiatives to promote the role of women in peace processes. More than 10 years of continued efforts to implement resolution 1325 (2000) have revealed the limits of a reactive approach. Gabon supports a more comprehensive approach aimed at incorporating conflict prevention as a fundamental part of an effective strategy to protect women and young girls from the agony of conflict and war. Through such a strategy, women would have leading roles, which of course entails women playing a part in the policy sphere in peacetime so that they can be fully involved in the different stages of mediation and political negotiation in times of crisis. In this regard, regional and subregional organizations, namely African organizations, should also adopt such a strategy. The African Union's incorporation of gender parity in the highest positions of its hierarchy is a strong indication of a move in that direction.

I would like to conclude by stressing that promoting more effective political participation by women at the level of the African continent to make them effective agents in prevention and peacebuilding efforts requires a greater contribution from all regional, multilateral and even bilateral players. Setting up programmes devoted to capacity-building for women and young girls, including those aimed at their socio-economic empowerment, are crucial, especially in the reconstruction and peacebuilding phase. We also believe that the various entities of the United Nations system and regional and international financial institutions, including the World Bank, must also play a dominant role in this area.

We would like to express our full support for the draft presidential statement that will be adopted at the end of our debate.

Mr. Osorio (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me, first of all, to thank the Secretary-General for his report of 29 September (S/2011/598*) and his briefing this morning to the Council. We would also thank Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Mr. Lazarous Kapambwe and Ms. Orzala Ashraf Nemat for their briefings, which provided a serious and complete framework for our debate.

Colombia appreciates the important role that is given in this report to promoting cooperation mechanisms, constructive dialogue and effective support for efforts being made in different countries, as well as the contributions from the General Assembly aimed at strengthening the national capacities of States in preventing and addressing all forms of violence against women.

We thank Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Under-Secretary-General for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, for her briefing and for the

contributions of UN-Women, which help to strengthen coordination and cooperation in the implementation of mandates relevant to women, peace and security. I assure Ms. Bachelet of our support as she fulfils her important mandate.

We also recognize the importance of the concept note (S/2011/654, annex) prepared by the delegation of Nigeria, where proper emphasis is placed on the participation and role of women in conflict prevention and mediation.

We agree with the Secretary-General that UN-Women constitutes the cornerstone for articulating the mandates of the United Nations system in promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. In this context, we emphasize the role that broad and inclusive intergovernmental consultations have in evaluating the gender architecture and the advancement of women, as well as the agreements between States on models and practices adopted in that area. All of that is an essential element for progress in improving national capacity to generate greater participation of women in conflict prevention and mediation.

The appointment of Ms. Margot Wallström as Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict has contributed to monitoring the implementation of respective resolutions within their scope of competence as established by the Security Council.

We also emphasize the importance of the reference in the Secretary-General's report to relief and recovery, as well as the actions being taken with regard to gender mainstreaming in the post-conflict phase, including job creation, education policies, life skills training, opportunities and support for children, access to basic services in health, education and legal support, and the provision of basic public services, such as water and sanitation. We emphasize that this represents an enormous challenge for States.

I would like to highlight the fact that the report of the Secretary-General notes progress made in Colombia in connection with the four aspects of resolution 1325 (2000), namely, prevention, participation, protection and relief and recovery. I think that it is also important to highlight other important actions that are being pursued in these areas in my country on the basis of our conviction that the phenomenon of violence against women includes domestic violence, violence committed in the context of the community and violence caused by illegal armed groups.

In terms of prevention, Colombia's armed forces have incorporated into their training programmes courses in the prevention of gender-based violence, sexual violence, sexual and reproductive health, sexual and reproductive rights and gender equality.

With regard to participation, I should also like to mention initiatives such as the creation of women's community councils, indigenous women's regional laboratories and community radio programming boards. These are tools designed to promote the involvement of women in public policies, support leaders to advance the implementation of such policies, sustain a dialogue with this sector and with women's social organizations, and promote participatory processes at regional, departmental and municipal levels.

There has been legislation in place in this area since 1992, recently updated by a law in 2011 that provides for and promotes the participation of women in the exercise of legislative policy work in the Congress, as well as in the executive and judicial branches. There are now 37 women in the Colombian parliament. The highest positions in the country's public prosecutors' and comptrollers' offices are held by women. In the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, the Minister and two deputy ministers are women, from whom I receive orders — I mean, instructions — every day.

All of that reflects the efforts being made by the Government of Colombia to adopt policies designed to include women at all stages of peacekeeping and peacebuilding while eliminating discrimination against women and promoting their economic, political and social empowerment, as well as their more active participation in development, both in decision-making and in enjoying the benefits that development brings.

Our priority is the incorporation of gender perspectives into our major national policies, including development plans, strategies for poverty eradication and the promotion of employment and entrepreneurial culture, among others. We place particular emphasis on action related to protecting women against all forms of violence, as well as for protecting those in particularly vulnerable situations, such as indigenous women,

migrant women, trafficked women and girls, and women in rural areas, among others.

As a member of the Commission on the Status of Women and of the Group of Friends of 1325, Colombia reaffirms its support for full implementation of that resolution. We stress the importance of coordinated and consistent support of the United Nations system for national initiatives aimed at building the capacity to address the security needs, recovery and development of women and girls in conflict and post-conflict.

Finally, we would like to reiterate that approaches to human rights that focus exclusively on monitoring mechanisms do not contribute to achieving sustainable solutions, unlike mechanisms for cooperation, constructive dialogue and effective support for countries, which do indeed genuinely contribute to effective solutions.

Mr. Barbalić (Bosnia and Herzegovina): I would like to commend you, Madam President, for convening this meeting. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General Michelle Bachelet for their briefings. I also thank Ambassador Lazarous Kapambwe and Ms. Orzala Ashraf Nemat for their remarks.

The commemoration of the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) last year resulted in a number of renewed commitments and achievements on the part of Member States in implementing that resolution and others on women and peace and security. This year has also seen numerous actions within the United Nations and by Member States in joint efforts to implement the resolution and advance women's participation in peace and security, with particular emphasis on preventive diplomacy, mediation efforts, conflict prevention and peacebuilding.

We welcome the report before us (S/2011/598*). The analysis of indicators it contains should provide valuable benchmarks for further planning and act as a road map. We also welcome the creation of the strategic results framework as an important tool for advancing implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and all other relevant resolutions on women and peace and security. Its main objectives include increasing consistency in decision-making processes among different United Nations bodies within their respective mandates and in capacity-building and cooperation with Member States, regional organizations and other partners, such as civil society.

Since the creation of UN-Women, greater coordination and coherence in policy and programming for women and girls are evident. We therefore consider that briefings of the Under-Secretary-General and the Executive Director of UN-Women should continue so as to facilitate a concerted and coordinated United Nations approach.

Conflict and post-conflict situations often bring violence and deprivation of rights. Addressing conflict-related or sexual and gender-based violence, and combating various abuses of women and girls' rights, is an integral part of the women and peace and security agenda. In that context, we emphasize the importance of bringing those responsible for crimes against women and girls to justice. A range of existing legal and reconciliation mechanisms should be used at the national or international level, while support for national institutions and institutional reforms must be an integral part of this process.

Ensuring that women are represented and participate in decision-making forums, institutions and mechanisms concerned with preventing and resolving conflict and with peacebuilding; that they are included in peace agreement negotiations and implementation; and that enabling conditions for women peacemakers and peacekeepers are created requires clear guidelines and support on the part of the United Nations and national authorities. Member States and regional and subregional organizations should invest more in strengthening the capacity of women's organizations. Such organizations should be provided with support for their conflict-prevention and resolution efforts and consulted more on local women's peace initiatives.

We believe that countries should work on adopting national action plans or strategies in order to integrate issues of woman and peace and security, and gender issues, into their national policies and create a broader basis for implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). In that regard, it is also important to increase State institutions and services' knowledge and capacity in order to implement the resolution and collaborate effectively with international organizations and civil society. Here, I recall that Bosnia and Herzegovina has adopted both a national action plan for the resolution's implementation and a gender action plan. Those two documents are crucial to streamlining activities related to the woman and peace and security agenda in relevant sectors and to accelerating the resolution's implementation in our country.

We firmly believe that women should be involved in the policymaking and post-conflict planning and programming processes. It is also important to increase the number of gender experts on the roster. Furthermore, the various implementation gaps should be addressed more systematically, including through improved coordination and accountability for results. Clarity, comparability and consistency are necessary in order to monitor the impact of various efforts on women's empowerment and their rights.

The role of the United Nations is to support Member States in this multifaceted process. It is important to create useful guidelines adapted to specific country situations, and to support the development of activities related to women and peace and security in the context of existing international obligations, rooted in national legislation.

The use of indicators can contribute to the efficient and effective monitoring and reporting of results and data collection and to identifying gaps or obstacles during this process in a coordinated manner. This is particularly important when we consider that successful implementation depends on the ability to clearly and distinctly measure the progress of our joint endeavours in the area of women and peace and security.

Finally, Bosnia and Herzegovina firmly believes that there can be no lasting peace and security without the full participation of women in every aspect and at every stage of peacekeeping and peacebuilding, as well as in conflict-prevention activities. We therefore remain committed to expanding our support for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), other relevant resolutions, and future efforts of the Security Council on this issue.

Mr. Berger (Germany): I thank you, Madam President, for having organized today's debate. I also thank the Secretary-General, Ms. Bachelet, Mr. Kapambwe and Ms. Nemat for their insightful remarks.

Germany aligns itself with the statement to be made by Head of the Delegation of the European Union.

As a member of the Group of Friends of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), Germany has always attached great importance to all aspects of the issue of women and peace and security, and particularly to that of turning words into action, 10 years after the adoption of that groundbreaking resolution. We therefore applaud the timely decision of the Nobel Prize Committee to honour three courageous and inspirational women who are exemplary models of how women can make a difference.

Germany heartily welcomes the Secretary-General's comprehensive report (S/2011/598*) and the analysis and recommendations it contains, including the strategic framework and the first set of indicators set out.

The draft presidential statement to be adopted today once again clearly recognizes women's significant role in prevention, conflict resolution and post-conflict rebuilding. Including women in peace initiatives is not a benevolent act; we see it as a key requirement for any lasting, sustainable peace. Women's participation will strengthen our capacity to resolve conflict and to build security and justice systems that protect the human rights of all. However, gaps still exist between stated commitments and the situation on the ground. Women remain severely underrepresented in peace negotiations and are often marginalized in efforts to build sustainable peace.

What can be done to close this gap? First, at the United Nations level, we commend UN-Women for its work in leading mainstreaming efforts to include, wherever possible, a gender perspective in United Nations activities, and in measuring progress made in implementing resolution 1325 (2000) against the indicators. It is crucial to constantly strive to place more women in leading positions, including within the United Nations, and to give women a voice during every stage of a peace process. There is a clear link between women's participation in the early stages of preventive diplomacy, peacemaking or peacebuilding and their presence in implementation mechanisms.

Secondly, at the level of the European Union and NATO, both within the European Common Foreign and Security Policy and NATO, the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in relation to conflict resolution has progressed. Forces are better informed on gender issues, and we are beginning to see the benefits of a new awareness and understanding where it matters — in the communities where soldiers are deployed. Female military medical staff serving in field hospitals lower the barriers to local women seeking treatment and female soldiers gaining better access to local women.

Thirdly, with regard to the national level, last year the German Government presented its third report to Parliament on its implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). It contains, inter alia, projects on gender training, including for United Nations peacekeepers, the prevention of sexual violence, and enabling women's participation in peace processes and their unhindered access to justice. A special focus is on support for women's organizations and non-governmental organizations in promoting women's empowerment.

In addition, the German Government has set up action plans on gender in development aid programmes and on civilian crisis prevention. Germany implements the indicators adopted by the European Union in 2010.

Fourthly and last, the Security Council could do more to systematically integrate women, peace and security issues into its daily work, including when mandating or renewing United Nations missions. Envoys and special representatives should address those issues, where relevant, in their briefings to the Council.

I would like to conclude by expressing Germany's support for the draft presidential statement to be adopted today.

Mrs. DiCarlo (United States of America): I thank you, Madam President, for having organized this debate and for your able leadership during your presidency. I should also like to thank the Secretary-General and the Deputy Secretary-General for their participation today, and Executive Director Bachelet and President of the Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Kapambwe for their informative briefings. I welcome to the Council Orzala Ashraf Nemat from the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, and thank her for her helpful remarks on the progress made and challenges faced by women in conflict situations. The United States also wholeheartedly welcomes the Secretary-General's report (S/2011/598*).

The awarding of this year's Nobel Peace Prize to Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Yemeni activist Tawakkul Karman and Liberian peace activist Leymah Roberta Gbowee is recognition of the role that women can play in helping to resolve conflicts. All three women are excellent examples of the difference that women can make when given the opportunity to make decisions about the future of their countries. They have had significant impact on their societies, and we congratulate them.

Over the past several years, the United Nations and its Member States have taken important steps to increase women's participation in issues related to peace and security. We established UN-Women and the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Through the Council's work, we have defined what we expect of parties to conflict with respect to the protection of women, and we have established a framework to track the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Many States, including my country, are developing national action plans to guide their engagement on issues of women, peace and security.

But all this is just a beginning. We must ensure that norms and institutional frameworks are turned into action. What counts now is implementation and delivering results.

The Secretary-General's report provides examples of both real progress and the challenges ahead of us. We welcome the initiative undertaken by the Department of Peacekeeping Operations and the Department of Political Affairs to include gender components, advisers and focal points on this issue in all field missions. We are pleased that a gender and mediation specialist has been appointed to the United Nations Standby Team of Mediation Experts to ensure that women's concerns are addressed in conflict prevention and resolution, and not just towards the end of a conflict, as is often the case. And we are encouraged that a growing number of reports to the Security Council, as well as mission mandate renewal resolutions, address issues related to women in conflict and post-conflict situations.

However, as the Secretary-General notes, "mere reference to women and peace and security resolutions is not enough" (*S/2011/598*, para. 74 (a)*). We must give United Nations entities strong support to implement and deliver results for gender equality. More can be done to ensure that the personnel of United Nations missions are adequately prepared to implement resolution 1325 (2000) and support it in their efforts. Both predeployment training and mission-wide strategies on the protection of civilians, including the needs of vulnerable groups such as women and girls, need to be improved.

Gaps also remain in ensuring that those serving in United Nations missions are held accountable for their performance, particularly in the case sexual exploitation and abuse. As the Secretary-General acknowledges, the United Nations still lacks a system that enables complaints of sexual exploitation and abuse to be reported safely. The United Nations needs to lead by example by actively enforcing the zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse by United Nations peacekeepers. Conflict-related sexual violence must be addressed from the very start in peace processes, and more women should be included as mediators and members of negotiating teams.

The United States is developing a national action plan to accelerate the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) across our Government and with partners in civil society. The plan will be centred on the four pillars of resolution 1325 (2000): participation, prevention, protection, and relief and recovery.

In the participation pillar, the United States has supported the inclusion of Afghan women in the High Peace Council and in follow-on shuras and negotiations in the reintegration and reconciliation process at the local level. We have also awarded $16.9 million in direct grants to Afghan women-focused non-governmental organizations.

In the protection pillar, the United States has contributed roughly $2 million to the Office of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. We have provided numerous courses to foreign militaries on human rights, the prevention of gender-based violence and sexual exploitation, and the protection of civilians.

In the prevention pillar, the United States has developed multiple programmes that seek to address the root causes of conflict, including a $26-million annual reconciliation programme that supports innovative programming in conflict-affected countries, and includes gender analysis.

In the relief and recovery pillar, the United States has provided significant funding to improve water and sanitation in situations in which women's safety and security are at risk. Our ultimate objective is to fully incorporate women and girls into our diplomatic, security and development efforts — not simply as beneficiaries, but as agents of peace, reconciliation, development, growth and stability.

As we move forward on our national action plan, we are cognizant that, as Secretary Clinton said at a Council debate on this issue last year,

> "ultimately, we measure our progress by the improvement in the daily lives of people around the world. That must be our cause, and empowering women to contribute all their talents to this cause is our calling" (*S.PV.6411, p. 15*).

All of us now face the critical challenge of turning our commitments on women, peace and security into results. We believe that, through our work here in the Council and our national efforts, we can meet this challenge together.

Mr. Salam (Lebanon): At the outset, allow me to thank you, Madam President, for having organized this important and timely debate. Allow me also to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his briefing, and Ms. Bachelet, Ambassador Kapambwe and Ms. Nemat for their presentations.

More than a decade has passed since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). Throughout that period, the United Nations system, regional organizations, Member States and civil society have made significant efforts to adapt the resolution to local settings through a wide spectrum of measures and initiatives. Progress has been made in terms of discourse and evolving practice on the participation of women in conflict prevention, resolution and peacebuilding, and awareness has increased of the threat that sexual violence constitutes to peace and security.

Despite important national, regional and international efforts, however, the conditions that women and girls still face in situations of armed conflict continue to be abhorrent. The benefits of resolution 1325 (2000) have yet to reach most women in conflict and in fragile settings. In that regard, allow me to make the following comments.

First, we view the prevention of conflict as a crucial element of resolution 1325 (2000). That includes the prevention of all forms of conflict-related violence against women and girls. Sexual violence remains the least-condemned war crime in peace agreements and beyond. The elimination of impunity is perhaps the single most effective preventive tool to fight that crime. In that regard, reforming the security sector and ensuring respect for the rule of law in a gender-responsive manner is of crucial importance.

Conflict and post-conflict societies should be assisted in those areas as early as possible.

The preventive aspect of resolution 1325 (2000) also includes women's full and equal involvement in conflict prevention efforts. We concur with the Secretary-General's report (S/2011/598*) that more attention needs to be paid to women's roles in the field. We support his recommendation for the Council to use its deliberations on preventive diplomacy and mediation to consider means of enhancing the role of women in conflict prevention.

Secondly, the meaningful participation of women in decision-making forums, institutions and mechanisms related to conflict resolution and peacebuilding is essential, not only for peace but also for sustainable development and long-term security. Such participation should be treated as a requirement for building a solid and genuine democracy, which cannot be fully achieved unless the inequalities affecting half of the population are adequately addressed.

In that sense, the political participation of women and addressing their specific needs are not solely social issues, but also good governance issues. In particular, women's engagement in peace negotiations is essential to ensure that their rights and needs are taken into account in peace agreements and institutional arrangements. Peace accord provisions could have far-reaching consequences on women's engagement in post-conflict governance and on their access to justice, reparations, resources and economic security.

International, regional and national actors should therefore spare no efforts to engage women and to ensure the inclusion of gender expertise in peace efforts. It is also essential that regular consultations between special envoys and mediators and women's civil society groups become standard operating procedure.

Partnerships with male community leaders and opinion-shapers could also play an important role in raising awareness of the benefits of women's participation and could help to implement gender-related programming at the local level.

Thirdly, we would like to stress the importance of investing in youth, girls and boys alike, as an essential driving force behind meaningful peacebuilding efforts. Arab youth have lately become the symbol of an uprising in the name of freedom, dignity and participation. In their legitimate struggle for a better life, Arab youth groups have exhibited immense creativity. The ideals of young people are their most valuable resource for influencing the development of their societies and the shape of their future. This has been embodied by Ms. Tawakkul Karman, the first Arab woman to become a Nobel Prize laureate, along with two great women leaders from Liberia.

Finally, it is our collective and individual responsibility as Member States to adopt a determined and consistent approach that will lead to positive and concrete results in the lives of women in conflict and post-conflict situations. The framework and the tools are at hand; let us back them with the necessary political will.

Mr. Moraes Cabral (Portugal): Thank you, Madam President, for convening this open debate on an issue to which Portugal attaches great importance. I would also like to thank the Secretary-General, Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Ambassador Lazarous Kapambwe and Ms. Orzala Ashraf Nemat for their very useful statements.

The theme of this year's open debate, "Women's participation and role in conflict prevention and mediation", was a core element of resolution 1325 (2000), which the Council adopted 11 years ago. However, as underlined in the excellent report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/598*), which we very much welcome, that objective still eludes us to a large extent. Today's debate is therefore very timely.

Portugal naturally shares the views that will be expressed in the statement to be delivered later by the observer of the European Union.

Women are indispensable actors in change and development. As we speak, the Arab Spring is a stage for the active participation of women in political processes. Tunisian, Egyptian and Libyan women today have higher expectations than in the past — legitimate expectations — regarding their role in the shaping of their countries' futures. Women who have striven to make their voices heard and who have played an important role in promoting political transitions are now looking forward to full and equal participation in the political sphere and to contribute actively to the stability, progress and cohesion of their societies.

Women indeed have a crucial role to play in rebuilding war-torn societies and in preserving social cohesion. They did it in Europe, during and after the First and Second World Wars. They did it in South America and in Africa, in countries divided by civilian strife. They still do it on a daily basis in several countries tormented by conflict. What is essential is to guarantee that women are included in peace processes and to ensure that their perspectives and direct knowledge of specific situations and concerns are taken into account as important contributions to the reshaping of torn societies in post-conflict situations and to peacebuilding efforts.

The decision of the Norwegian Nobel Committee to award the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize to three women in recognition of "their non-violent struggle for the safety of women and for women's rights to full participation in peacebuilding work" is a much-deserved recognition of women's significant contribution to peacebuilding and democracy. It will undoubtedly send a powerful message to women around the world to engage in efforts to determine the future of their countries.

While acknowledging that important progress has been accomplished in implementing resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions on women and peace and security, we need to recognize that significant challenges still remain. Women are still underrepresented at several levels in peacekeeping and peacebuilding efforts, just as they are inadequately represented in formal peace negotiations. The exclusion of women from peace talks and peacebuilding efforts often means that insufficient attention is paid to addressing gender disparities and women's concerns in the post-conflict phase, thus reinforcing a circle of inequality and marginalization.

The Council will later adopt a draft presidential statement encouraging efforts to strengthen the capacities of women's organizations to engage in conflict prevention and mediation. Portugal fully supports these specific efforts to increase the effective participation of women mediators in peace processes, as well as efforts to prepare women to effectively intervene in the resolution of conflicts and contribute to peace and stability.

In that regard, we welcome the efforts of UN-Women to provide technical support to women's organizations. We recognize that much has been done at the local and regional levels to successfully strengthen women's civil society groups. We also welcome every effort by Member States to promote women's political participation and to eliminate discriminatory or constitutional barriers against women. Further action is also needed on other obstacles that prevent women from participating fully in politics, such as poverty, sexual violence, the lack of access to education, negative societal attitudes and cultural and psychological barriers.

The Council has a key role to play in monitoring women's participation in political processes. I take this opportunity to highlight once again the importance of inviting Ms. Michelle Bachelet to brief the Council on women's political participation in conflict situations on its agenda as a complement to the briefings that the Council receives from other parts of the Secretariat. We warmly congratulate her on the very important work she is carrying out and on her leadership and commitment. Here, we wish to reiterate our full support for her endeavours.

In conclusion, Portugal has been striving to support not only the promotion and protection of the human rights of women, but also their political participation in situations on the agenda of the Council, such as those in Libya, Somalia, South Sudan and Afghanistan, among others. In the pursuit of peace, this Council cannot afford to exclude the skills and talents of half the world's population. In this context, my country reaffirms its commitment to ensuring women's effective participation in peace and security and to translate this commitment into enhanced action.

Mr. Li Baodong (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China appreciates the efforts of Nigeria to convene today's open debate. I wish to thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for his statement. I also listened carefully to the statements by Madam Bachelet, Executive Director of UN-Women, Ambassador Kapambwe, Permanent Representative of Zambia and President of the Economic and Social Council, and Ms. Nemat of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

Women are vulnerable in conflict situations and therefore require special attention. Women can make unique contributions to the maintenance of international peace and security, and their potentials must be further tapped. The Security Council's adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) was important progress in the efforts of the international community

to protect women's rights and interests. However, there remains a lot to do in comprehensively implementing that resolution. I wish to emphasize four points.

First, to avoid and reduce the harm suffered by women in armed conflict, it is first necessary to prevent war and reduce conflicts. The Security Council bears the primary responsibility of maintaining international peace and security. To safeguard women's rights and interests, the Council should conduct active preventive diplomacy and promote the use of means such as dialogue, consultations and negotiations for the peaceful settlement of disputes. Council resolutions, especially its mandate for civilian protection, should be strictly implemented so as to avoid more casualties among women and children.

Secondly, ensuring the participation of women in conflict resolution and prevention and in rehabilitation and reconstruction is an important part of the efforts to implement resolution 1325 (2000). China supports a bigger role for women in good offices and dispute mediation. We hope the Secretary-General will appoint more female special representatives and special envoys, and we hope to see greater participation by women in United Nations good offices and mediation concerning major international and regional hotspots.

Thirdly, in conflict resolution and post-conflict reconstruction, the national ownership of the government and people concerned must be respected. The international community can provide constructive help, but it must adhere to the United Nations Charter and the principle of non-interference in internal affairs. In safeguarding the rights and interests of women and enhancing their role in peace and security, specific national conditions and historical and cultural differences must be fully taken into account. A uniform approach is not desirable.

Fourthly, in advancing the agenda of women, peace and security, the relevant United Nations organs should collaborate while working in their respective spheres of competence. The Council should, in accordance with its Charter mandate, focus its attention on situations that threaten international peace and security. At the same time, the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) also requires organs such as the General Assembly, the Economic and Social Council and the Human Rights Council to fully play their roles. China appreciates the leading role of UN-Women and looks forward to its greater contribution to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Mr. Karev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): We are grateful to the Secretary-General, Mr. Ban Ki-moon, the Under-Secretary-General and head of UN-Women, Ms. Bachelet, the President of the Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Kapambwe, and the representative of civil society, Ms. Nemat, for their work on the issue of women, peace and security and for the information they have provided on the state of affairs in this area.

The history of resolution 1325 (2000), more than ten years of it, has clearly confirmed in practice the key role and significance of this instrument for advancing the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution and in post-conflict reconstruction and also in protecting women during conflicts. In that regard we express how pleased we are that this year the issue of women's participation in preventive diplomacy is given priority attention in the Council's presidential statement.

As we have said on many occasions, in various forums and events, women must not be seen just as victims in armed conflicts. That in itself would be a form of discrimination. An important precondition for eliminating discrimination against women in such situations is their full participation in all related aspects of preventive diplomacy. Women can and must make a more significant contribution to conflict prevention and resolution.

In terms of the Security Council's Charter-based functions, its attention should be given only to those situations that represent a threat to international peace and security. Issues of violence against women should be considered in the Council only as they relate to themes of maintaining peace and security and in strict relation to those situations that are on the Council's agenda. We are convinced that that will guarantee the effective work of the Council to implement resolution 1325 (2000).

We also suggest that artificially linking gender issues in all their ramifications exclusively to the Security Council contradicts its mandate and leads to imbalances in terms of system-wide coordination. Let us not forget also that this issue is dealt with not only by the Security Council but also by the General Assembly, the Peacebuilding Commission, the Human Rights Council and the Committee on the Status of

Women. It is important that they not duplicate each other's mandates.

Nor are we convinced that it would be proper to establish a specialized mechanism under the Security Council to oversee the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). Clearly, what is needed is increasing the effectiveness of existing mechanisms within the system by improving their coordination and accountability under the leadership of UN-Women. We welcome the efforts, led by Ms. Bachelet, of that body to consolidate the work of various structures, offices and special procedures that are dealing with women's issues and peace and security. But it is still too early to assess the work of UN-Women, which began its work only ten months ago.

We have carefully studied the report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/598*) prepared for this meeting. We suggest that it would be proper to ensure that future reports reflect the multifaceted nature of violence against women, as is required by resolution 1325 (2000) itself. In particular, we call on the Secretary-General to give more attention to such important problems as killing and wounding of women and children, particularly as a result of indiscriminate or excessive use of force. Often such crimes go unpunished or are justified as being unavoidable or being so-called collateral damage. This contradicts provisions of the Geneva Convention, inter alia. The recent events in Libya are an example of this.

If required, we are ready to come back to this theme and provide details on what we actually mean by this. In this context, with regard to the first part of the report, with the indicators of the effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), we wish to stress that there are still open questions about the suitability and relevance of individual indicators and their scope and use. We also suggest that work on those indicators should be done in a more transparent and open way, with the involvement of all Member States, since, ultimately, they are of interest not just to the 15 States on the Council.

This applies also to the annex to the report. The Council requested a strategic framework on the work of United Nations offices in implementing the resolution over the next ten years. We also suggest that the guarantee of effective work on the ground lies in taking into account the State-specific natures and needs.

In conclusion, I should like once again to reiterate our conviction that guaranteeing women's protection and rights during armed conflict can be ensured only through the joint efforts of all interested parties. For us, resolution 1325 (2000) continues to serve as the frame of reference in that regard.

Mr. Briens (France) (*spoke in French*): I would first of all like to welcome the holding of this debate and to thank the Secretary-General, Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Ambassador Lazarus Kapambwe and Ms. Orzala Ashraf Nemat for their briefings and their participation in this meeting. I should also like to associate myself with the statement to be delivered on behalf of the European Union.

It seems to us more important than ever that the Security Council address the issue of women's role and participation in conflict prevention and mediation. The Arab Spring has served to forcefully remind us of that. Women have been significant actors in the transitions that have occurred in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. In Syria and Yemen women are today continuing to fight with exceptional courage to defend their freedom, to ensure that the most fundamental human rights are respected and to make their calls for democracy heard. In this connection, I wish to welcome this year's awarding of the Noble Peace Prize to three exceptional women who are doing outstanding work in the service of peace and human rights.

Women must continue to be represented and actively consulted in the ongoing reform processes. They must have a place at the side of their male counterparts in order to successfully carry out the transition to democracy and establish regimes that are fairer and more respectful of the freedoms of their peoples. This is about the success of the ongoing political transitions and, consequently, about the stability of the countries themselves and, in turn, about the security of the region.

The effective implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security, is a priority for France, which actively worked for its adoption, just as we have worked to strengthen awareness of this issue at the European Union, especially during our 2008 presidency of the Union. Last year, France adopted a national plan of action on the implementation of the resolution. In particular, it aims at prioritizing, at the international level, the protection of women against all forms of violence and promoting

respect for their basic rights, as well as their equal participation in decision-making processes in the context of peacebuilding, reconstruction and development.

France has undertaken commitments in the context of its plan of action to strengthen women's direct participation in reconstruction efforts and the decision making process, namely, by focusing priority on access to leadership positions. In particular, France is implementing several cooperation programmes, in partnership with UN-Women, aimed at strengthening women's participation in the decision-making process, improving their access to, and participation in, the justice sector. We are doing that by relying on civil society organizations and, in particular, women's groups, which I would like here to commend. Those programmes are being carried out in Africa and the Arab world, as well as in Afghanistan. Moreover, France is developing programmes intended to bolster the participation of women in peacekeeping operations. Our plan of action also includes initiatives to improve awareness of the need for respect for the rights of women in the context of training programmes, which is another important element in the implementation of the resolution on women, peace and security.

I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his recent report (S/2011/598*). We agree with the bulk of its analyses. We would also like to commend the work done by UN-Women under the leadership of Ms. Bachelet. The strategic framework and follow-up indicators referred to in the report are useful tools, both for Member States and for the United Nations, in following up the implementation of the resolution on women and peace and security. Not only do they make it possible to assess results, but also to identify shortcomings in women's participation in conflict prevention and resolution. They also make it possible to refocus the efforts of the international community to ensure better protection for women in armed conflict.

We have seen progress in this regard in the past 10 years. To complement the resolution, the Council has put in place a framework that makes possible a more comprehensive approach to the protection of women and their participation in the resolution of conflicts. At the same time, the United Nations Secretariat and its agencies, funds and programmes, as well as other bodies of the Organization, now undertake more coordinated efforts. Ms. Bachelet's role has undoubtedly made a contribution in that regard. I also wish to commend the work and coordinating efforts of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict, as well as his Special Representative on Children and Armed conflict for her respective contributions.

Allow me to conclude by referring to the matter of justice, which is a major issue in the implementation of the resolution on women and peace and security. How can women express themselves and participate in public life if they must live alongside their former tortures, or live in fear and under oppression? How can they have access to justice if the road to justice entails humiliation, threats and reprisals? Access to justice and combating impunity are essential elements in ensuring women's full participation. In particular, there is a duty on the part of the international community to make use of all the instruments available to it — establishing commissions of inquiry, making referrals to the International Criminal Court and putting in place targeted sanctions, in the case of serious violations and systematic assaults on the rights of women. Only then will the efforts of the international community take on genuine credibility when it comes to protecting women and promoting their participation in conflict resolution.

The President: I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the representative of Nigeria.

I would like to convey the appreciation of my delegation to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon for taking time out of his busy schedule to attend this meeting to brief the Council on the important issue of women and peace and security. His report (S/2011/598*) and his comments here today provide the appropriate foundation on which to anchor our debate. I would also like to thank Ambassador Lazarus Kapambwe, President of the Economic and Social Council, Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Executive-Director of UN-Women, and Ms. Orzala Ashraf Nemat, of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, for their very instructive briefings.

Although Ms. Bachelet aptly highlighted the modest progress made by Member States and the United Nations in advancing the agenda of resolution 1325 (2000), we must heed her warning that we are very far from sufficiently and systematically integrating women into the process of conflict prevention and peacebuilding. We believe that this is an auspicious moment in the history of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The draft

presidential statement that is to be adopted today could not have come at a better time, coming as it does in the aftermath of the recognition by the Nobel Committee of the role and participation of the three eminent women in conflict resolution and peace processes in their respective communities. While congratulating President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, Ms. Leymah Gbowee and Ms. Tawakkul Karman for their groundbreaking achievement, we share the hope of the Nobel Committee that this recognition of the important place of women in the peace process, which the draft presidential statement echoes loudly, is a watershed moment and paradigm shift in the global effort to implement resolution 1325 (2000).

We note with satisfaction that the draft presidential statement accords with the theme of this open debate, namely, "The role and participation of women in conflict prevention and mediation". Through the draft presidential statement, the Council recognizes that women can, and do, play crucial roles in the prevention of conflict. Nevertheless, it also notes that more needs to be done to create the enabling conditions for the participation of women in all stages of the peace process.

Such efforts at creating the right conditions for ensuring women's full participation should include increasing the participation and representation of women in preventive diplomacy initiatives. It should also include strengthening the capacities of the relevant Government institutions and women's organizations involved with conflict and post-conflict issues, the adequate representation of women in the negotiation and implementation of peace agreements, support for local women's peace initiatives, the promotion and protection of the human rights of women, higher levels of representation in decision-making roles, and ensuring proper coherence and coordination among the United Nations entities responsible for implementing the women, peace and security agenda in the entire United Nations system.

On the subject of United Nations coherence and effectiveness in particular, we recognize the important and central role of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), working in close partnership and collaboration with the Special Representatives of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict and for Children and Armed Conflict, respectively.

The gaps and challenges hindering the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) are indeed substantial. National, regional and international actors must rededicate themselves to addressing them. We believe that developing and implementing national action plans constitutes a viable strategy for fulfilling the obligations under resolution 1325 (2000).

As a signatory to the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Dakar Declaration, Nigeria has committed itself to accelerating the national and regional implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). The Declaration calls for a regional action plan within ECOWAS to support national action plans. ECOWAS will coordinate and collaborate with the United Nations Office in West Africa and with UN-Women in this process.

Nigeria is also committed to fulfilling its obligations under the African Charter of Human and Peoples' Rights on the rights of women in Africa. As Ms. Bachelet has often said, the obstacles to women's political participation, which I believe have a direct bearing on their capacity to play an active role in preventive diplomacy and conflict prevention, are indeed enormous. Violence, poverty, lack of access to education and health care, and limited economic opportunities all combine to undermine the role of women and girls in conflict prevention, peace negotiations and peacebuilding. It is therefore necessary that we develop and take measures to address these inherent obstacles.

Promoting women's equality and empowerment is, in our view, one of the best ways to address the root causes of conflict and therefore prevent such conflict. I envisage a presidential statement along those lines in the near future.

We recognize the relevance and relationship between the Council's preventive diplomacy initiatives and its women, peace and security agenda. As women are usually some of the first and worst hit in any conflict, preventing conflicts from breaking out serves to ensure the peace and security of women and girls. Even as we all remain true to the provisions of resolution 1325 (2000), which focuses on armed conflict and post-conflict situations, it has become imperative to devote equal attention to conflict-prevention strategies, including the use of preventive diplomacy.

It is gratifying to know that the Council has the opportunity every year to review the progress made in implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We look forward to the inclusion in next year's report of the Secretary-General of, among other things, specific actions and achievements as well as the challenges faced in the implementation of the presidential statement that we will be adopting later today.

We also look forward to the high-level review to be held in 2015 on the progress made in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), confident that this and future presidential statements and initiatives of the Council will play pivotal roles in national, regional and global strategies on the women, peace and security agenda.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

The Council has before it the text of a draft statement by the President on behalf of the Council on the subject of today's meeting. I wish to thank Council members for their valuable contributions to this statement. In accordance with the understanding reached among the members of the Council, I shall take it that the members of the Security Council agree to the statement, which will be issued as a document of the Security Council under the symbol S/PRST/2011/20.

It is so decided.

I wish to remind all speakers to limit their statements to no more than four minutes, in order to enable the Council to carry out its work expeditiously. Delegations with lengthy statements are kindly requested to circulate the texts in writing and to deliver a condensed version when speaking in the Chamber.

I give the floor to the representative of Finland.

Mr. Laajava (Finland): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Nordic countries: Denmark, Iceland, Norway, Sweden and my own country, Finland.

Let me start by thanking the Nigerian presidency for having organized this debate and the Secretary-General, Under-Secretary-General Bachelet and the President of the Economic and Social Council, Ambassador Kapambwe, for their valuable remarks. I wish to convey special thanks for the insights of Orzala Ashraf Nemat on behalf of civil society.

Fully recognizing the contribution of women and increasing their effective participation before, during and after conflict is a priority for the Nordic Governments, and we thank you, Madam President, for the choice of the theme of this year's debate.

Last year, we celebrated the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000). The emphasis was on commitments for action and systematic follow-up. We thank the Secretary-General for his excellent report (S/2011/598*), which includes concrete data based on the indicators the Council agreed to last year and a very good strategic framework to guide the United Nations in the way ahead.

Exactly a week ago, the Security Council resolution on Yemen (resolution 2014 (2011)) called upon all concerned parties to improve women's participation in conflict resolution and encouraged them to facilitate the equal and full participation of women at decision-making levels. Yesterday's resolution on Libya (resolution 2016 (2011)) emphasized the importance of the full and equal participation of women and the respect for the human rights of all. We welcome these very strong calls.

During this eventful year, women have taken to the streets and squares across North Africa and the Middle East and demanded change, equality, freedom and justice alongside men. We call on the Security Council to ensure that women's voices are heard and reflected in planning, actions and results. Provisions on women's full participation and on the protection and promotion of women's human rights should be included in all relevant country-specific resolutions, and they should be systematically followed up when the special envoys and Special Representatives of the Secretary-General report back to the Council.

The conflict-prevention and mitigation efforts of women through civil society and governmental channels deserve our increased financial, political and technical support. Civil society participation serves a double aim: it fosters inclusive dialogue and development. It also builds the capacity of women to engage in more formal processes. Increasing the number of women in Government structures, for example in the security and justice sectors, makes such institutions more democratic, gender-responsive and accountable. This contributes to conflict prevention.

Women must be fully involved from the very beginning of peace processes so as to enhance the

quality and sustainability of peace agreements. Mediation and negotiation teams should have specialized gender expertise and carry out inclusive consultations. Further efforts are urgently needed to nominate and appoint more women mediators and to address the obstacles women face. Increasing the number of women in international organizations and in national diplomatic services is one tool for enlarging the pool of qualified women. At the same time, guidance and expertise is needed for mediators to integrate a gender perspective in ceasefire and in peace agreements. The Nordic countries welcome the work of UN-Women and fully support its joint strategy with the Department of Political Affairs on gender and mediation as an effective tool.

In post-conflict planning and budgeting, there should be targeted actions and sector-specific gender experts for all relevant areas, such as security sector reform and economic recovery. The Secretary-General's seven-point action plan on peacebuilding (see S/2010/466) provides detailed recommendations on that. We welcome the work done so far. However, much remains to be done, and we encourage the United Nations to implement all of the recommendations without delay. As donors, we commit to do our part both by supporting women's participation in post-conflict donor conferences and by directing funding for initiatives that contribute to gender equality.

A year ago we made commitments to advance the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). I would like to report briefly on three areas in which the Nordic countries have concretely implemented their commitments.

The first area is national action plans. All Nordic countries have established national actions plans based on a holistic view of peace, security, development and human rights. Several line ministries, governmental agencies and civil society organizations work together to ensure timely and effective implementation and promotion of resolution 1325 (2000). The Nordic national action plans are results-oriented, and their implementation is guided by a set of indicators to measure real progress.

The Nordic countries have engaged in twinning and cooperation with partner countries, including Afghanistan, Kenya, Liberia, Nepal and the Philippines. We provide technical and financial support for the development of their new structures. But we also learn from them and hope that in this way our activities will be more responsive to the needs and priorities of countries with recent experience of conflict or fragility. Together we foster political will for women's rights in every part of the world.

The Nordic countries have greatly benefited from the advice and partnership of civil society. We support the work of local and regional non-governmental organizations from Afghanistan to the Great Lakes region and from Nepal to the Sudan.

Secondly, we are pleased to report a clear increase in the number of women among the military, police and civilian peacekeepers deployed. We also committed to train our personnel on gender equality and human rights. The mixed police teams deployed in Haiti, Liberia and Afghanistan have all received training on resolution 1325 (2000). Some have been specifically trained to address sexual and gender-based violence. We have developed a human rights manual for all crisis management personnel and supported gender-sensitive security sector reform in Palestine and the Balkans.

Thirdly, we have increased our efforts to fight impunity, with due attention to the rights of victims. Justice, including meaningful reparations for victims, is essential in restoring the confidence of the people in their Government. There should never be amnesty for the most serious crimes, including sexual violence, which can constitute war crimes and crimes against humanity.

We remain staunch supporters of the International Criminal Court and have been at the forefront of the work linking its complementarity principle with development activities that strengthen rule of law at the national level. We have also led the discussions around the review of the Court's strategy for victims, and we support its Trust Fund for Victims.

I thank you, Madam President, for this opportunity to share some of the Nordic countries' views and recommendations. We stand ready to continue to work with the Council and with the United Nations towards full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Austria.

Mr. Riecken (Austria): Last year's debate, on the tenth anniversary of the adoption of landmark Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), under the presidency of Uganda (see S/PV.6411), significantly contributed to focusing Member States' commitment and gaining momentum for enhanced implementation of the resolution at national, regional and international levels. However, as the President's concept note (S/2011/654) rightly points out, many gaps and challenges remain on the road to translating words into action and ensuring the full participation of women in all stages of conflict prevention, conflict resolution and peacebuilding.

Therefore, we would like to thank Nigeria for providing the opportunity to consider concrete steps and for its efforts that resulted in the Council's presidential statement (S/PRST/2011/20). Let me also thank the Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General Bachelet both for their briefings today and their commitment to the women, peace and security agenda. We also thank the President of the Economic and Social Council and the civil society representative for their very interesting statements.

Austria aligns herself with the statement to be made on behalf of the European Union.

The topic of our debate is a very timely one. Today we should acknowledge the important contribution made by women in the Arab world to bring about political transformation, and the decisive role they have played and continue to play in the quest for democracy, transparent political systems, the rule of law and the promotion and protection of human rights. It is difficult to imagine the achievements of the Arab Spring in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya without the active participation of women and young people, and it is difficult to imagine a successful and inclusive democratic transformation process without their active participation.

The effective representation and full involvement of women in peace processes, in transitional governments and in political life is a prerequisite for addressing their specific needs and concerns and for ensuring that their rights are adequately reflected in State structures, peace agreements, law enforcement processes, et cetera. One half of the population cannot claim to represent the other half. Women need to represent themselves.

Of course, efforts at the national level must go hand in hand with efforts at the international level. The United Nations and its Member States need to further increase the number of women in peacekeeping operations and political missions in order to ensure gender expertise in the planning of missions and in all mediation efforts, and to enhance the appointment of women to senior leadership positions. The Secretary-General's seven-point action plan on women's participation in peacebuilding (see S/2010/466) contains important commitments in that regard, and we encourage the United Nations system to take them forward.

In order to be able to guide and track the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) by the United Nations system over the next 10 years, Austria very much welcomes the strategic framework contained in the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/598*). The formulation of concrete medium and long-term targets is an important step. Austria is convinced that the comprehensive set of indicators that received the Council's support at the open debate one year ago is not only essential for monitoring the strategic framework, but should also be used to track efforts at the national level.

We fully support the recommendations in the Secretary-General's report, including the call for more frequent briefings of the Council by Executive Director Bachelet, as well as by relevant Special Representatives of the Secretary-General. Of course, the inclusion of women, peace and security aspects in country-specific reports to the Council, including reporting on attacks on women journalists, women human rights defenders and women in public office, is equally important to providing the Council with the necessary information to act upon.

The presidential statement (S/PRST/2010/22) adopted at last year's debate (see S/PV.6411) explicitly invited Member States to report to the Security Council on progress made in their efforts to implement resolution 1325 (2000). In that regard, I would briefly like to update the Council on some of the commitments made by Austrian Foreign Minister Michael Spindelegger last October.

Austria has almost finished the revision of its national action plan on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), which will be approved by the Council of Ministers by the end of this year. As for the first national action plan of 2007, civil society has been closely involved in these efforts. The revised national

action plan will be guided by the set of indicators that were presented by the Secretary-General and supported by the Security Council last year.

Mission gender advisors have been trained and deployment to the Balkans has begun. Austria has also followed up on its commitment to provide more adequate training for our peace workers in the field. Standard training elements on gender have been finalized and their implementation in education and pre-deployment training for our soldiers and civilian personnel will be completed in 2012.

Austria has also made significant progress on its commitment to incorporate the provisions of the statute of the International Criminal Court that classifies crimes against women as crimes against humanity, war crimes or genocide, as part of our national criminal code.

Austria has continued its support to UN-Women and is currently exploring opportunities for cooperation with partner countries to support the development of a national action plan.

Mr. Rivard (Canada): On behalf of the Government of Canada, I thank the Nigerian presidency for today's open debate. I also wish to express my gratitude for the statements made by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, Ms. Bachelet, Mr. Kapambwe and Ms. Nemat.

Canada welcomes the recent report by the Secretary-General on women, peace and security, as well as the 2011 General Assembly resolution 65/283, on strengthening the role of mediation in the peaceful settlement of disputes, conflict prevention and resolution, as a positive step towards improving cooperation and coordination.

One year ago this month, Canada announced its action plan, which seeks to enhance the participation of women in peace processes. We encourage the meaningful participation of women in all elements of peacekeeping. We also promote efforts to protect the human rights and physical safety of women and girls, including against rape as a weapon of war and all forms of sexual violence in conflict.

There remains much work to be done with respect to mediation and conflict prevention to implement the Security Council resolution on women and peace and security. During his recent visit to Tripoli, Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs John Baird met with Libyan women's groups to discuss the important role that women's leadership will play in the new Libya and its democratic institutions. The Minister urged the new Government of Libya to ensure the participation of women in decision-making during Libya's transition. Libya is an example of an environment in which barriers to women's access to peace processes and to reconstruction efforts will need to be addressed by all those involved.

(*spoke in French*)

With regard to follow up to this debate, we encourage the Security Council to continue to provide the political leadership and take targeted actions to ensure the meaningful participation of women in all conflict prevention, mediation and resolution processes. In order to inform the work of the Council, we recommend that the Council receive regular briefings on those matters by the Secretary-General and other relevant officials, including the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. Canada applauds the Secretary-General's recommendation to develop a framework including specific early warning indicators on sexual violence in conflict.

At a time when resources are scarce, we support the call to use mediation increasingly as a cost-effective form of conflict prevention and resolution.

Mr. Kim Sook (Republic of Korea): Allow me to express my sincere appreciation to you, Madam President, for the convening of this open debate. My appreciation also goes to Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon; Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director of UN-Women; Mr. Lazarous Kapambwe, President of the Economic and Social Council; and Ms. Orzala Ashraf Nemat, of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security.

The tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) on women, peace and security last year provided us with a valuable opportunity to look back upon our achievements. Substantial progress has been made, but wide gaps as well as challenges remain. Women and girls are still the most seriously affected in conflicts. We welcome the Secretary-General's report (S/2011/598*), which equips us with a tool for reviewing the current situation with regard to implementing resolution 1325 (2000). We also note with appreciation the Secretary-General's proposal for a strategic framework as guidance for United Nations

implementation of the resolution. The measures and targets set out in that framework should be closely monitored and regularly reviewed. With regard to the four priority areas and the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), my delegation would like to highlight the following points.

First, eliminating impunity is critical to preventing gender-based crimes. We commend the Council's continued efforts to fight impunity and uphold accountability for serious crimes against women and girls. The fight against impunity for crimes against women and girls has been strengthened through the work of international tribunals, including the International Criminal Court. In that regard, we believe that the ratification of the Rome Statute should be further encouraged. However, without parallel efforts at the national level, that will fall short of making tangible changes on the ground. States need to further strengthen their justice systems to prosecute gender-based crimes and improve systems for the protection of victims and witnesses.

Secondly, women's participation at all stages of the peace process needs to be enhanced. The exclusion of women and the lack of gender expertise in negotiations may lead to irreversible setbacks for women's rights, leaving crucial issues such women's engagement in post-conflict governance neglected in peace accords. Efforts to increase women's participation in decision-making bodies need to be sustained. In that regard, my Government expresses its full support to the timely initiative by the United States Government on the draft resolution on women and political participation at the Third Committee of the General Assembly.

Thirdly, we need to pay greater attention to the vulnerability of displaced women and girls, given their particular risk of sexual and gender-based violence. My delegation welcomes the target set out in the strategic results framework on the special measures to increase the security of female refugees and persons internally displaced by armed conflict, as well as to ensure multisectoral prevention and response mechanisms for sexual and gender-based violence in camp and non-camp settings alike.

My Government believes that the newly established UN-Women has a central role to play in coordinating the activities of the United Nations and in implementing resolution 1325 (2000). The Republic of Korea has been committed to supporting UN-Women, in particular its activities in the field of women and peace and security. To that end, the Korean Government has significantly increased its financial contribution to UN-Women, and, in particular, contributed to the building back better project on women's participation in peacebuilding.

The momentum generated by the tenth anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000) last year should not be lost. I believe that the strategic framework, together with the focused commitment shown by many delegations today, will guide us to advance our endeavours for women and peace and security. The Republic of Korea reaffirms its commitment to implementing resolution 1325 (2000) in cooperation with the international community.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Liechtenstein.

Mr. Wenaweser (Liechtenstein): It is a pleasure to see you, Madam President, preside over this meeting. I would like to thank you for convening it. We welcome the latest report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/598*), which for the first time measures the progress of implementing resolution 1325 (2000) against specific indicators. We also further welcome its recommendations as an important step towards moving the women, peace and security agenda further from rhetoric to action.

As outlined in the concept note (S/2011/654, annex) circulated for this debate, the participation of women in decision-making forums related to conflict prevention and resolution, peacebuilding and post-conflict recovery is a central goal of the women, peace and security agenda. Research has shown that the exclusion of women and the lack of gender expertise in peace negotiations lead to irreversible setbacks for women's rights. Peace accords often neglect to ensure the engagement of women in post-conflict governance and their access to economic opportunities, justice and reparations.

It is unfortunate that, 11 years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), the contribution of women to conflict management is still severely undervalued and underutilized. The Council must increase its efforts to incorporate a gender perspective in relevant country-specific resolutions, with a view to increasing women's participation in peace negotiations and mediation and in meeting the specific concerns of women during

post-conflict reconstruction. The Council must also, hand in hand with the General Assembly, address the lack of women as lead peace mediators by encouraging the Secretary-General to appoint women to such positions and to ensure that adequate gender expertise is provided for all United Nations-led peace processes. We therefore welcome the adoption of today's presidential statement (S/PRST/2011/20), which will help to further strengthen the perception of women as stakeholders, as opposed to victims or aid recipients.

Liechtenstein honours its commitments to implementing resolution 1325 (2000), as pledged at the commitment conference "A call to action" on 25 September 2010. We continue to support international efforts to end impunity for the most serious crimes, including those committed against women during armed conflict. That commitment includes continued financial support to the Trust Fund for Victims established by the International Criminal Court (ICC), which adopts a gender-based perspective across all programming and specifically targets victims of all forms of sexual and gender violence. Most important, the Trust Fund provides direct assistance to victims, and thus has an immediate impact on the ground. The Rome Statute of the ICC has significantly advanced international law by including sexual violence in the definition of crimes, in particular as a crime against humanity. The ICC therefore represents an important mechanism in the fight against sexual violence, which should be better integrated in the Security Council work on the issue.

Research by the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security reveals that the Council does not consistently apply the principles of the women, peace and security agenda in its country-specific work. In an attempt to make that complex agenda more accessible, and thereby contribute to a better mainstreaming, we have developed an iPhone application on women and peace and security, in close partnership with Switzerland, Peacewomen and the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, now available in an updated version that includes monthly action points. Those action points contain concrete recommendations that provide guidance on how the Council can systematically meet its obligations to women in armed conflict.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Maldives.

Mr. Mohamed (Maldives): On behalf of the Republic of Maldives, let me thank the Nigerian presidency for convening this important debate on women and peace and security on the eleventh anniversary of the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000). I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for his report on women and peace and security (S/2011/598*). I welcome the remarks this morning by Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director of UN-Women; His Excellency Mr. Lazarous Kapambwe, President of the Economic and Social Council; and Ms. Orzala Ashraf Nemat of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, on this important issue.

Since the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we have seen the emergence of a host of other resolutions focused on ending sexual violence in conflict zones, calling for greater accountability and the participation of women. During periods of conflict, women and children are the first to be affected and are often targeted, especially with sexual violence. With that in mind, the Maldives emphasizes the need to monitor the situation and actions of international security forces in zones of conflict, such as Afghanistan, Darfur and Haiti. The Maldives is especially concerned by allegations of sexual violence by United Nations peacekeepers in Haiti and Côte d'Ivoire.

Maldives has expressed support for Libya's National Transitional Council. With its current transition from conflict to creating a stable Government, we urge the National Transitional Council to stay mindful of the specific needs of women and its obligations towards them. That includes everything from disarmament and reconciliation to women's participation and representation. The path towards democracy is never easy, and women are often the first to be forgotten.

Today, we know that the empowerment of women leads to more stable nations with greater social harmony, economic prosperity and political tolerance. In order to promote international security, the Maldives suggests that we move beyond the framework that limits that discussion to conflict zones. The empowerment of women and democratic development, which leads to moderation and peace, enjoy a symbiotic relationship whereby any sincere efforts towards one leads to the other.

In the Maldives, through the democratic movement we began the process of empowering our

population and reaffirming the rights of women. As the movement took hold, the former Administration was compelled to make concrete efforts to address national concerns, and allowed for a national survey on the abuse of women to be conducted. The results showed that one in three women in Maldives, irrespective of class or geography, is abused over the course of their lifetime. In addition to that, women are becoming increasingly more isolated through the adoption of conservative Islamic interpretations and their participation in the social, economic and political life of the country is diminishing.

It was democracy that turned the tide of abuse in the Maldives. Government-led efforts to address issues related to women resulted in the establishment of call centres and protective services. Civil society participation and its advocacy in such efforts have also been instrumental. In addition, the current Government has taken steps towards training policemen and policewomen to respond effectively to domestic violence and abuse, while encouraging a greater participation of women in political life.

The President of the Maldives went so far as to endorse all the female candidates for our recent local elections, regardless of party affiliation. We are also proud to note that three of the 12 Cabinet ministers are women. A Maldivian woman was also elected to the United Nations Subcommittee on Prevention of Torture. For the first time, the Secretary-General of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation is a woman, who happens to hail from the Maldives.

By involving women in social, economic and political life, we are able to create stable nations that foster moderation, countering Islamic conservatism. A universal truth about radicalism is the exclusion and isolation of women. If we are to change the dynamics of security in the world and to ensure greater global stability, the only way forward is through ensuring the participation and active engagement of women without restrictive social norms.

The Maldives sincerely hopes that members of the Security Council consider that new paradigm and its implications for global security.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Australia.

Ms. King (Australia): Australia welcomes the focus of this open debate on women's participation and role in conflict prevention and mediation. We thank you very much, Madam President, for convening it.

Although the number of conflicts worldwide has fallen since the 1990s, the proportion of civilian casualties has increased dramatically. The toll in terms of human suffering, economic loss and wasted development opportunities has been enormous.

Women and girls are much more vulnerable to the impacts of violent conflict than men, due to the breakdown of social and legal systems when violence occurs and because of inherent gender inequalities. Women frequently bear the brunt of the devastating consequences of armed violence, including sexual violence. But women are not just victims. They are often the key to preventing conflict and violence from emerging, to resolving conflict and to rebuilding societies once guns fall silent.

The Council has consistently recognized the significance of women in preventing, managing and resolving conflict, including as recently as through two important recent resolutions, resolution 2014 (2011) on Yemen and resolution 2009 (2011) on Libya. We welcome that fact. The reality, though, is that women are still largely excluded from the processes that can lead to conflict or make peace. Women represent less than 8 per cent of peace process participants and fewer than 3 per cent of signatories to recent peace agreements. Even when women are included in negotiations, they are rarely present from the start. That means that many defining decisions are made long before women get to the table.

Women have much to contribute to peace. As the Secretary-General has rightly observed, women are crucial partners in shoring up the three pillars of lasting peace — economic recovery, social cohesion and political legitimacy. It is not possible to create a legitimate and durable post-conflict political system that does not include the full and equal participation of women in decision-making. The role of women in economic development must be recognized in order to grow a post-conflict economy. Women, after all, are most likely to be providing direct support to children and extended kinship networks. Bringing the voice of women to the forefront of conflict prevention and mediation work will therefore help build more resilient communities and a more sustainable peace. That is key to the Security Council's work.

Of course, when we talk about conflict prevention we are talking not just about involving women in preventive diplomacy. We also speak of the much broader agenda of ensuring that drivers of conflict do not have the chance to surface. Democratic institutions, the rule of law and economic development are foundations of peaceful societies. We cannot expect such societies to flourish without embracing the role that women play in shaping them.

Recent years have seen several institutional developments to better integrate these matters into the work of the Security Council and the United Nations. The establishment of UN-Women was a landmark development. We welcome its initial work to take forward the implementation of all the resolutions on women and peace and security. But more can be done. We encourage the Security Council to receive regular briefings from Michelle Bachelet, Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of UN-Women, and Margot Wallström, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict. We welcome the reference in today's presidential statement (S/PRST/2011/20) to briefings by Ms. Bachelet. We hope that both she and Ms. Wallström can brief the Security Council at their initiative and when they regard elements of the women and peace and security agenda as being relevant to country-specific Security Council deliberations.

We also encourage the United Nations to include relevant elements of the women and peace and security agenda in all country- and mandate-specific reports to be considered by the Security Council. It is essential to ensure that the Council takes decisions that are informed by the work and wishes of a community's women.

As the Secretary-General's report (S/2011/598*) highlights, concerted efforts are needed at all levels, in particular among those responsible for technical and financial support to national peace processes.

In our own Asia-Pacific region we have seen great improvements in women's capacity to engage in peace processes that affect them. That is also a key focus of our own aid programme in the region. In Indonesia and Nepal, we have supported women mediators, negotiators and advisers to identify and implement strategies for improving women's participation in peace processes. That important work continues to document best practices related to women and peacemaking in the Asia-Pacific region. The United Nations Development Programme network of peace advocates, N-PEACE, is also undertaking important work in Timor-Leste, Sri Lanka, Indonesia and Nepal. Earlier this month, N-PEACE launched an interactive internet portal to connect peace advocates within and across countries with experts in the field. That facilitates the sharing of strategies to promote gender equality and women's empowerment in conflict and post-conflict situations.

At the grass-roots level, we have witnessed the mobilization by women in the Pacific to ensure their voice is heard. For example, FemLINKPacific leads a community and media policy network on women, peace and security in Fiji, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Bougainville in Papua New Guinea. Through the production of a wide range of media initiatives, they are empowering women across the Pacific to engage with decision makers at all levels on issues that affect them.

Women are particularly vulnerable to the effects of conflict but can be powerful in ending it and are central to rebuilding a society after conflict. They should be given the opportunity to shape their own future, as we have heard numerous times today. Peace negotiations not only shape the post-conflict political landscape directly, through agreements on justice, power-sharing and constitutional issues, but also indirectly, by lending legitimacy to those represented at the peace table. A properly integrated role for women enhances the prospects of a durable and lasting peace. Clearly this debate has underscored remaining gaps and challenges. We now have a collective responsibility to translate this debate into further action.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Israel.

Mr. Prosor (Israel): I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his remarks. Allow me also to thank Mr. Lazarous Kapambwe, President of the Economic and Social Council, for his statement, and also Under-Secretary-General Michelle Bachelet for her briefing and her leadership on the pressing issues before us.

Today the Council takes up a debate that is very important to the Jewish State and the Jewish people. Our sages often remind us of the story of Miriam, who was Moses' sister and Judaism's first female prophet.

As the Jewish people wandered through the desert for 40 years, Miriam sustained them with a well that supplied fresh and plentiful water. Upon her death, the well dried up and disappeared. The message of her story is very clear. Empowered women are the life source for thriving communities. Prosperity comes when society ensures that women are allowed to lead; it evaporates when their rights are restricted.

Those principles have been an integral part of the State of Israel since its inception. Gender equality is enshrined in our 1948 Declaration of Independence. It has been implemented through law and public policy, starting with a landmark and comprehensive piece of legislation in 1951, known as the Women's Equal Rights Law. More than 40 years ago, Golda Meir became Israel's Prime Minister — making my country just the third in the world to elect a woman to its highest office.

This year, the Israeli parliament enacted a new law as part of our implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), requiring that all Government investigative committees include an appropriate representation of women. By law, women must be included on Israeli negotiating teams. Maybe that will move a few things forward.

In a region where women are too often excluded from public life, Israeli women stand out as leaders in law, politics, mediation and conflict prevention and resolution. The opposition in the Israeli parliament is headed by a woman, Tzipi Livni. She also led the Israeli negotiating team with the Palestinians as the former Foreign Minister, and my former boss. Another woman, Shelly Yachimovich, was recently elected to lead the Israeli Labour party.

In Israel, we take pride in the fact that approximately half of our internationally renowned judiciary is made up of women, including our Supreme Court, which is lead by Justice Dorit Beinish. Women also occupy senior positions in our defence establishment. This year Major General Orna Barbivai made history when she was elevated to the second-highest rank in the Israel Defense Forces.

As part of our commitment to implementing resolution 1325 (2000), Israel's Government holds workshops to promote dialogue between Israeli and Palestinian women at the Mount Carmel International Training Center in Haifa. More than 650 Israeli and Palestinian women have participated in more than 20 workshops over the past eight years. Such seminars provide women with the tools and understanding needed to promote peace and non-violence. A wide range of similar projects are now under way in Israel.

We must recognize the clear connection between advancing peace and advancing equal rights for women. Across many corners of the Middle East today, women are prohibited from driving, voting, receiving inheritances, getting an education and travelling alone in public. The subjugation of women in our region cannot be ignored; it is a major obstacle to creating real understanding between cultures and to building sustainable peace.

Peace begins at home. Children learn the values of tolerance and understanding, first and foremost, from those who raise them — usually from their mothers. We must recognize that when women are subjugated and denied access to education, these important values are damaged and lost. Empowered women hold together healthy families, build strong societies and serve as the most important bridges to other cultures.

Peace in the Middle East and around the world depends on empowering women and ensuring their equal rights. Women can and should lead the way to peace, but they must be given opportunities to sit in the driver's seat. The international community has a duty to remove the obstacles from their path, so that we all can build the foundation for a brighter future.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Japan.

Mr. Nishida (Japan): I thank the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UN-Women and the President of the Economic and Social Council for their insightful briefings. We also welcome the representative of civil society, and thank her for her statement.

Japan welcomes the report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/598*), which demonstrates his clear commitment on this issue. We are encouraged that UN-Women, under the strong leadership of Ms. Bachelet, has been resolutely promoting the agenda of women and peace and security as one of its priorities.

Japan applauds the recent decision to award the Nobel Peace Prize to President Ellen Johnson Sirleaf and Ms. Leymah Gbowee of Liberia, and

Ms. Tawakkul Karman of Yemen, who are champions of women's participation in peacebuilding processes. It is groundbreaking that the announcement of the Prize clearly mentions resolution 1325 (2000).

As a member of the group of Friends of Mediation, Japan has consistently advocated the importance of mediation and conflict prevention. We welcome the fact that the General Assembly's very first resolution on mediation, which was adopted this June, underlined the importance of the participation of women and the provision of gender expertise in mediation (see General Assembly resolution 65/283).

In order to prevent the recurrence of conflict and sustain long-standing peace, the needs of women and girls must be fully addressed in post-conflict peacebuilding. To that end, it is essential that women's full and effective participation be ensured from the very beginning of conflict prevention and mediation processes. Japan expects UN-Women, in cooperation with other partners including the Department of Political Affairs, to coordinate and strengthen the efforts of the United Nations system in this area and provide guidance to regional organizations and Member States in their efforts in mediation.

The important role of regional organizations, such as the African Union, the Economic Community of West African States and the Intergovernmental Authority on Development, in conflict prevention has been widely recognized. In that regard, it is encouraging, as shown by the Organization of American States ministerial meeting for the advancement of women to be held next week in El Salvador, that regional organizations have taken steps towards the consistent inclusion of women and women's rights in their conflict prevention efforts.

The promotion of women's participation in peacekeeping and peacebuilding is key to the protection and empowerment of women. The strengthening of gender expertise and perspectives in peacekeeping activities and increasing the number of female peacekeepers remain a challenge. In that regard, Japan deployed a female military liaison officer to the United Nations Integrated Mission in Timor-Leste this year. We also provide gender training to Japanese personnel before they are deployed to peacekeeping operations. This year, through the United Nations Development Programme, Japan is supporting a project to promote the employment of female police officers and their training in Afghanistan, which so far has resulted in the employment of more than 1,200 Afghan women in local police forces.

There remain large implementation gaps with regard to resolution 1325 (2000) in all areas, including prevention, participation, protection and recovery and relief. The indicators and strategic framework in the reports of the Secretary-General contribute to identifying the gaps and addressing those limitations in a more systematic manner. Japan, for its part, will continue to do its utmost to close the implementation gaps before the fifteenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), in cooperation with our partners and, in particular, with women's organizations and civil society.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Tunisia.

Mr. Jerandi (Tunisia) (*spoke in French*): First of all, I would like to thank the presidency of the Security Council for having organized this important meeting. My delegation welcomes in particular the opportunity to participate in this debate after last year having celebrated the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) entitled "Women and peace and security", a historic resolution of which Tunisia, as a non-permanent member of the Security Council in 2000, was one of the authors. I was personally involved in negotiating that resolution.

My country continues to attach particular importance to the issue and would like to underscore its commitment to promoting the rights of women, particularly women in conflict situations, as well as to promoting the full implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in all its aspects.

Tunisia's interest in the issue follows from its long-standing commitment to the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment. That is a strategic choice that was taken at the time of independence in 1956 and which has become an integral part of my country's national development policy. The advanced status that Tunisian women enjoy today is one of the most striking results of that choice. My country is convinced that peace, development and democracy cannot be carried out without the full participation of women in public life and in the decision-making process.

The 14 January 2011 revolution in Tunisia, in which Tunisian women of all ages and all categories actively participated, illustrates the commitment of Tunisian women to establishing a democracy where public freedoms, justice and equality are the custodians of social peace and development. On 23 October, the day of the historic elections to our National Assembly, Tunisian women were at the forefront of voters, thus affirming their right to active citizenship.

This debate on the issue of women and peace and security is a good opportunity to evaluate the progress made by the United Nations and Member States in this area and to assess what remains to be done.

It is clear that resolution 1325 (2000) has defined a framework of standards guiding United Nations efforts on policies for integrating gender issues into the whole of the work of the Organization. It is also important to recognize that there is now great awareness of the many types of violence inflicted on women in conflict, and that significant attempts have been made to address them. Since the primary victims of armed conflict are women, along with children and the elderly, it is important that they take on a key role in peacekeeping and peacebuilding and, even more urgently, in the process of prevention, to which it is never too late to devote special attention.

That is why women's perspectives are increasingly taken into account in planning and implementing peace processes and in peacekeeping operations. The appointments of the Under-Secretary-General of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflict are important signs that should be built on, particularly since it must be acknowledged that despite progress, shameful crimes against women continue to occur during armed conflict, especially in Africa and occupied Palestine, where women are still coping with terrible situations every day.

National ownership of resolution 1325 (2000) is the best way to ensure its effective implementation, given that primary responsibility for combating rape as a weapon of war falls to Member States, whose duty it is to urgently take measures to deal with this phenomenon, measures that educate as well as enforce. Tunisia has already launched a national action plan for implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). In particular, it promotes training women in peacekeeping and peacebuilding so that we can deploy qualified personnel in United Nations operations on the ground.

The plan is also designed to improve pre-deployment training, with particular emphasis on special measures aimed at protecting women against all forms of violence against them. In September 2010 Tunisia organized a regional seminar on this subject, enabling participants from the western Mediterranean countries in the framework of the 5+5 process to exchange national experiences with regard to the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Tunisia intends to continue implementing that resolution as apart of its comprehensive approach to gender equality and the empowerment of women, and will make itself available to the United Nations concerning any aspect of implementing resolution 1325 (2000) and other international instruments dealing with the welfare of women and their participation in decision-making processes, as well as promoting a culture of respect for women.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Italy.

Mr. Ragaglini (Italy): I would first like to congratulate you, Madam President, on organizing this open debate of the Security Council, and to commend your commitment to promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women. I thank the Secretary-General, the Executive Director of UN-Women, the President of the Economic and Social Council and the representative of the Working Group on Women and Peace and Security for the comprehensive scope of their briefings. And I join previous speakers in recognizing the pivotal role of UN-Women in advancing the women and peace and security agenda.

Italy aligns itself with the statement to be delivered by the European Union, and wishes to make some additional remarks in its national capacity.

Women's participation in conflict prevention and preventive diplomacy is crucial to achieving peace, as the Security Council highlights in its decision to mark the eleventh anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) on women and peace and security. We welcome the presidential statement the Council adopted today (S/PRST/2011/20).

Italy believes that if we want to see tangible progress in this area, more needs to be done at the national, regional and international levels.

First, women and women's rights must be consistently included in peace talks. Women are formidable negotiators, mediators and peacebuilders, but all too often they are denied access to negotiations at the highest levels because of a lack of political will and commitment. A transparent and inclusive peace process involving representatives of every segment of society, including women, is the most likely to succeed.

Secondly, women's rights must be an integral part of peace agreements. One measure of the success of a peace settlement is the extent to which obligations under the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and other international human rights conventions are fulfilled.

Thirdly, it is not enough to simply advocate the participation of women in peace processes. We need to provide concrete support so that women can build the skills needed for meaningful involvement. And education is crucial. At the same time, social barriers blocking women's access to peace processes must be addressed. Since men are also a part of the equation, civic education and human rights programmes for both men and women at the community level can help lift such barriers and hammer home the importance of gender inclusiveness. We must also support civil society organizations, particularly women's groups, which are vital to creating better links among women and between State and community.

Lastly, it is high time that we fully mainstreamed resolution 1325 (2000) into the work of the Security Council. The Council should ensure that its resolutions, including mission mandates and renewals, consistently integrate and substantively advance the women and peace and security agenda. The Council should also benefit from more regular and frequent briefings by the Executive Director of UN-Women and by the relevant special representatives of the Secretary-General.

Regarding efforts to achieve more consistent and serious progress in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) at the global level, Italy welcomes the strategic framework and its concrete targets for guiding United Nations implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) developed by the Secretary-General, as well as the use of a set of indicators to monitor progress in implementing the framework. The framework will ensure a more comprehensive approach and more results-oriented action on the part of the United Nations system. Regional organizations should also consider adopting similar tools. At the national level, action plans remain a key instrument for ensuring implementation of the resolution.

In December 2010, Italy adopted a three-year action plan for resolution 1325 (2000). It provides a strategic framework for improving implementation of the provisions of the resolution, under which a national focal point at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs monitors all relevant activities. The plan focuses on such key goals as increasing the number of women in the national police and armed forces, strengthening the inclusion of women in peace operations and their decision-making bodies, protecting the human rights of women and children during and after conflicts, strengthening women's participation in peace processes, and engaging with civil society organizations in order to promote implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

Since then, Italy has had regular contacts with civil society organizations to benefit from their experience in the field. The national focal point is promoting awareness activities by disseminating the plan throughout all sectors of government and society. At the international level, Italy has introduced the issue of women and peace and security as a priority to be raised during the Universal Periodic Review of the Human Rights Council, when the human rights situations of Member States under consideration are being addressed, in addition to bringing up the issue in bilateral contacts with the countries concerned.

Eleven years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), we are all being called on to renew our commitment to ensuring that women can assert their right to determine the peaceful futures of their communities. Let us not miss the opportunity.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Luxembourg.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): Luxembourg congratulates the Nigerian presidency of the Council for having organized this open debate on women and peace and security, which gives us an opportunity to take stock of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions. We commend you, Madam President, on your concept note

(S/2011/654, annex) focusing on the role of women in conflict prevention and mediation.

Luxembourg fully aligns itself with the statement to be made by the observer of the European Union.

We thank the Secretary-General and Under-Secretary-General Michelle Bachelet for their briefings on the efforts undertaken by the United Nations system over the past year to implement the women and peace and security agenda. We particularly welcome the invitations extended to the President of the Economic and Social Council and to the representative of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security to participate in this meeting. Their perspective and expertise are particularly relevant to today's debate.

The awarding of the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize to Liberian President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf, to her compatriot, Ms. Leymah Gbowee, and to Ms. Tawakkul Karman of Yemen is highly symbolic recognition of women's crucial role in the establishment and preservation of peace. We pay tribute to all the Tunisian, Egyptian and Libyan women who have so decisively contributed to shaping the Arab Spring.

Although women's participation in Tunisia's recent elections has not lived up to all expectations, we are confident that Tunisian women will be able to assume, at all levels and in all political and economic institutions, their responsibilities in the work of building their country, and that they will thereby set an example for other countries in the region and around the world. We urge Libyan leaders to grant women their full and proper place in the construction of the new Libya. We express our solidarity with the women of Yemen and Syria, who continue to fight against oppression and for their rights to freedom and democracy.

We welcome the Secretary-General's conclusions in his recent report (S/2011/598*) that the indicators proposed last year (S/2010/498), which were endorsed by the Council in its presidential statement of 26 October 2010 (S/PRST/2010/22), had made a major contribution to consistency and coherence in international efforts. We appreciate the Secretary-General's candid assessment of the challenges that lie ahead and support his observations and recommendations.

We must focus our efforts even more on implementing the normative framework created over the past 11 years. The strategic results framework is the right tool to accurately measure progress or the absence of it. We encourage the Secretary-General to continue to collect data based on the set of indicators presented in his 2010 report. At the same time, we encourage the entire United Nations system and all Member States to help the Secretary-General to implement his zero-tolerance policy on sexual exploitation and abuse perpetrated by the Blue Helmets. Beyond the suffering of women and girls, which we have a moral obligation to prevent, the credibility of the Organization and of our efforts in peacekeeping and peacebuilding in general is at stake.

Allow me, in my capacity as Chair of the Guinea configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, to highlight the role that Guinean women must play in the establishment of democracy in Guinea, and specifically in national reconciliation efforts in their country, which was wounded by decades of authoritarian rule and military dictatorship. The Peacebuilding Commission is striving to assist Guinea to fully integrate women into all political processes and into economic and social life.

In that context, I encourage the Secretary-General to push the entire United Nations system to pursue, with even stronger determination, the implementation of his seven-point action plan on the role of women in peacebuilding. In his report on the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) under consideration, the Secretary-General outlines a few areas of progress, but he also acknowledges that progress is slow in an area of particular interest for today's debate — the participation of women in mediation efforts — and in the area of women's economic integration. At this stage, we do not have sufficient data to measure progress towards the goal of allocating 15 per cent of all United Nations-managed funds in support of peacebuilding to gender equality and women's empowerment.

Luxembourg continues to place great importance on the plight of women in crisis situations and on mainstreaming the gender dimension into the work of international and regional organizations in that respect. Last December, Luxembourg decided to fund a major project of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations that is aimed at strengthening women's leadership and participation in political life and in peacebuilding activities in countries emerging from conflict. With our support, concrete results are being achieved in three

countries — Timor-Leste, Haiti and the Democratic Republic of the Congo — through partnerships forged between national and local authorities and United Nations missions and agencies. We are determined to maintain and to reinforce that national commitment. By strengthening the role of women in conflict prevention and mediation, we will help to improve society as a whole.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Switzerland.

Mr. Seger (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): Last year, when we were assembled here in the Chamber to commemorate the tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000), I mentioned that I had travelled to Burundi to meet with women's peace organizations whose peaceful demonstrations had a significant impact in limiting violence during the elections (see S/PV.6411). I am very happy that those women's actions for peace were honoured with the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize. Like my colleague from Luxembourg, who spoke before me, I would like to take this opportunity to thank and congratulate the three Nobel Prize recipients and all the women for peace whom they represent.

The events of the Arab Spring have highlighted the leading role of women and emphasized the urgency of including them in efforts to form their Governments and shape policies. That is why we would like to thank the Nigerian presidency for choosing women's participation as the theme of this debate. This key aspect of resolution 1325 (2000) remains a core objective of Swiss foreign policy, in particular of our national action plan, which contains specific measures to mainstream the gender dimension into its mediation programme. For example, we strive to ensure the balanced participation of women and men in our Government's annual peace mediation training courses, in which United Nations staff regularly participate. Furthermore, our mediators take gender-specific aspects into account in their work. Finally, although still a challenge, we actively promote the role of women as mediators.

I am honoured to make the following comments on behalf of the Human Security Network, namely, Australia, Chile, Costa Rica, Greece, Ireland, Jordan, Mali, Norway, Slovenia, Switzerland and Thailand, as well South Africa as an observer. The Human Security Network is an informal group of States that advocates a holistic approach to security based on the individual, which complements the more traditional understanding of national and international security.

The tenth anniversary of resolution 1325 (2000) brought significant progress in the normative and institutional areas. As a result, the Security Council now has an adequate set of instruments for time-bound and measurable actions in order to move forward with the agenda set forth in resolution 1325 (2000). UN-Women was created and has now issued its first strategic plan, with an initial set of indicators on resolution 1325 (2000) having been put in place. We believe that these are useful tools and we are hopeful that the established targets can be achieved with concerted action.

However, we conclude in a rather sober assessment that those achievements are still not matched by the necessary political will. The Human Security Network encourages the Security Council to continue its efforts to meet its women, peace and security obligations, in particular by means of issuing concrete instructions in resolutions mandating or renewing United Nations peacekeeping missions — a practice that the Secretary-General mentions approvingly and encourages in his report (S/2011/598*); regular encounters with women stakeholders during missions; and frequent exchanges with UN-Women and the Special Representative to the Secretary-General on Sexual Violence in Conflicts.

I now return to speaking in my national capacity. We would like to draw the attention of the members of the Security Council to the monthly action points of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security, and the Women, Peace and Security Handbook published by Peacewomen, both supported by Switzerland and Liechtenstein. These two instruments are now also available as an iPhone application. They are, in our view, excellent tools for supporting the gender-mainstreaming policy in the context of the Security Council, and we encourage members to make use of them.

This year's report of the Secretary-General again shows that the increased participation of women in peace promotion remains a challenge. Capacity-building exercises for women mediators are ongoing in different parts of the world to provide a cadre of well-prepared women to be involved in future peace talks. I note, for example, the training activities undertaken by Swisspeace in West Africa, with the cooperation of the

United Nations Office for West Africa and UN-Women, and in Kyrgyzstan with UN-Women.

However, our experience shows that it is not enough to train women as mediators. The Security Council and Member States need to put strategies in place to facilitate the active involvement of women and women's rights in peace processes, including by including women mediators and by ensuring that women's rights are integrated into peace agreements.

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Argentina.

Mr. Limeres (Argentina) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation commends you, Madam, for your initiative to convene this open debate. We also thank Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon; Under-Secretary-General Michelle Bachelet; Ambassador Lazarous Kapambwe, President of the Economic and Social Council; and Ms. Orzala Ashraf Nemat of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security for their statements.

Our country welcomes the report of the Secretary-General (S/2011/598*), which comprehensively reflects the important role that women play in preventive diplomacy, peace negotiation processes, and post-conflict reconstruction. The merit of resolution 1325 (2000) is specifically that the Security Council recognizes therein the key role that women can play as protagonists in peace processes. The international community must pool its efforts to ensure that this protagonist role remains possible. We are convinced that lasting peace can be attained only if women participate in all phases of peace processes. We therefore welcome the idea of compiling lists of women candidates to mediate conflicts.

We also believe that the establishment of UN-Women was a key step in the consolidation of the women and peace and security agenda, embodied, inter alia, in technical assistance that the entity is providing to countries of all regions in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) and subsequent resolutions. We wish in particular to express our appreciation for the cooperation of UN-Women in the ongoing drafting of Argentina's national action plan, which has been created on the basis of a series priority areas of our domestic and international policy, including the defence of multilateralism, contributions to peace processes, the promotion and protection of human rights, gender equality, and the protection of civilians in conflict. Another priority is increasing the political participation of women and including the gender perspective in all matters related to peace and security at the national, regional and international levels.

Our plan is the result of a participatory and comprehensive exercise led by the Ministry for Foreign Affairs, and involves other State and civil society agencies. In addition to incorporating the traditional contributions of the Ministries of Security and Defence, the plan includes input from stakeholders with experience in training and assistance to women victims of gender violence and human trafficking, who we believe are able to contribute to the reconstruction of societies affected by armed conflict, thereby underscoring the gender approach in the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process and preventing the re-victimization of women. Moreover, we believe it necessary to include cooperation in the field of health, in particular sexual and reproductive health, and in the integration of women into the labour market and the educational system.

I cannot conclude without expressing my appreciation for the report's mention of Argentina's efforts to increase the number of Argentine women deployed in its armed and security forces, as well as to peacekeeping missions. The report also notes our initiatives to develop and improve training in the specific protection rights and needs of women and girls. We will pursue such efforts in the conviction that, 11 years after the adoption of resolution 1325 (2000), much remains to be done if we are to achieve its full and effective implementation.

The President: I now give the floor to His Excellency Mr. Thomas Mayr-Harting, Head of the Delegation of the European Union to the United Nations.

Mr. Mayr-Harting: I am speaking on behalf of the European Union and its member States. The candidate countries Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Montenegro; the countries of the Stabilisation and Association Process and potential candidates Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina and Serbia; as well as Ukraine, the Republic of Moldova, Armenia and Georgia align themselves with this declaration.

In recent years, women have played a visible and decisive role in movements aimed at rebuilding and reshaping societies. Therefore, we also find the theme of today's debate more than pertinent and welcome the

opportunity to discuss concrete means to ensure women's full participation in peace processes, which is a core element of resolution 1325 (2000). We thank the Secretary-General, the Under-Secretary General, the President of the Economic and Social Council and Ms Orzala Ashraf Nemat for their statements.

Last year, the Security Council noted with concern that women's participation in conflict resolution remains too low. Of the nine peace agreements signed in 2010, only two had provisions ensuring women's rights. Today's theme points to another important issue — the need to ensure women's participation in all stages of peace processes, and from early on. Women, peace and security issues need to be systematically integrated into preventive diplomacy, early warning, human rights and security monitoring. This has a direct impact on the inclusion of women's rights and perspectives in the later stages of the peace process.

Women's absence from formal peace negotiations is in turn often followed by their absence from bodies laying the foundations for a new, post-conflict society. These include political decision-making bodies, ceasefire and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration commissions, constitutional and legislative reform commissions, as well as truth and reconciliation bodies. This needs to be accompanied by sufficient gender expertise among the actors involved in peace processes. We therefore welcome the recent Department of Political Affairs and UN-Women joint gender and mediation strategy to equip mediators and their teams with expertise to address gender issues. We welcome the Secretary-General's intention to continue to increase the number of gender experts in the United Nations rosters for surge capacity for crises, standby experts for humanitarian response and mediation, and specialists on conflict prevention and post-conflict planning. In this regard, we emphasize the seven-point action plan of the Secretary-General presented in 2010.

We are encouraged by the increased participation of women in United Nations field missions and welcome further efforts to increase the number of women in senior leadership positions both at Headquarters and in the field. Civil society, including women's organizations, plays an important role in sustaining the momentum for recovery and transformation, and enhancing women's participation. This is also reflected in the findings of the World Bank's annual *World Development Report* of 2011, focused on conflict, security and development.

Our meeting a year ago (see S/PV.6411) was aimed at providing a strong impulse for the continued implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). It also provided a space for concrete commitments to close what you, Madam President, have called a "troubling gap" between global and regional commitments and actual practice. During the past year, we have also gained useful mechanisms to monitor, measure and evaluate our progress. We would also like to commend the work of UN-Women, which plays a crucial role in mobilizing the support of the United Nations system for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

We welcome the strategic framework — which includes concrete targets to guide the implementation by the United Nations of resolution 1325 (2000) — developed by the Secretary-General in response to the Council's request, and the use of the set of indicators to monitor progress in implementing the framework. It provides an important means of ensuring the coherence, coordination and accountability of United Nations action.

In this regard, we also appreciate the useful briefings provided to the Council by Under-Secretary-General Bachelet, as well as the Special Representative on Sexual Violence in Conflict and the Special Representative for Children and Armed Conflict. We support the call to accommodate more frequent briefings to the Council on women, peace and security, including upon the request of the Under-Secretary-General and the Special Representatives. We also encourage UN-Women's efforts to continue its cooperation with the Special Representatives. We note positively the call to consider means of enhancing women's prevention role in the Council's deliberations on preventive diplomacy and mediation.

Last year, the EU presented its commitments for the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). I would like to give a brief overview of our activities to follow these up.

In 2008, the European Union adopted a Comprehensive Approach for the implementation of Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008). Further to this, we established 17 indicators to evaluate gaps in our action and to improve accountability in this regard. The first report based on the indicators was published in May 2011, and the

results are encouraging. The EU is active on this issue in more than 70 countries. Its support amounts to about €200 million a year for the development and implementation of national action plans, support for non-governmental organizations, and training for governmental agencies.

We are strongly committed to enhancing the consideration of gender aspects in the early planning of our missions and operations, during their conduct and in the lessons-learned processes. In November 2010, the European Union adopted its first report on the lessons learned and best practices in connection with mainstreaming human rights and gender into the military and civilian missions under the Common Security and Defence Policy (CSDP). All these missions and operations now include human rights or gender expertise. For instance, the two CSDP missions in the Democratic Republic of the Congo include experts on the prevention of sexual violence, while the EU Integrated Rule of Law Mission for Iraq offers courses for female police, judicial and penitentiary officers and has trained more than 340 women since 2005.

The EU has also established a mediation support team to ensure the representation of women in mediation processes and the availability of gender expertise in mediation teams which the Union supports. The support provided by the European Union to the United Nations Mediation Support Unit will specifically target the participation of women in peace processes.

To adequately train those deployed, we developed standard training elements on human rights, gender and child protection in the context of Common Security and Defence Policy missions in 2010 and are now finalizing the first gender-training module. The EU remains committed to supporting and sharing the outcomes of its ongoing work with the relevant United Nations agencies and bodies, as well as States Members of the United Nations, in order to enhance women's participation in peace processes.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Angola.

Mr. Gaspar Martins (Angola): I have the honour to address the Security Council on behalf of the States members of the Southern African Development Community (SADC), namely, Botswana, the Democratic Republic of the Congo, Lesotho, Malawi, Mauritius, Mozambique, Namibia, Seychelles, South Africa, Swaziland, the United Republic of Tanzania, Zambia, Zimbabwe and my own country, Angola.

Allow me at the outset to commend you, Madam President, for including this very important topic in your agenda and highlighting it through this debate.

We thank the Under-Secretary-General and Executive Director of the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), Ms. Bachelet; the representative of the NGO Working Group on Women, Peace and Security; the representative of the Department of Peacekeeping Operations; and Ambassador Kapambwe, President of the Economic and Social Council, for their briefings to the Council this morning. We also take this opportunity to thank the Secretary-General for his report (S/2011/598*).

SADC is encouraged by the progress achieved so far in the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We feel that important groundwork has been laid for a long-term effort by the United Nations system towards the full implementation of that resolution. We welcome the increased political commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment in peace processes. It is important that we maintain the momentum to sustain the gains made to date. It is also necessary that we all make concerted efforts to fully realize the objectives of resolution 1325 (2000).

Achieving gender equality and empowering women are two of the key principles that propelled the founding of SADC, as reflected in the SADC Treaty. The SADC Protocol on Gender and Development of 2008 put measures in place to ensure that women obtain equal representation and participation in all key decision-making positions by 2015.

SADC is concerned about the widespread and systematic sexual violence to which women and girls continue to be subjected in conflict situations, and it condemns the use of sexual and gender-based violence against women and children. It is our collective view that all parties to armed conflict should respect the regional mechanisms and international laws applicable to the rights and protection of women and children.

SADC has developed a strategy to address sexual violence against women and girls, particularly in conflict and post-conflict situations, as well as a framework for mainstreaming gender within the SADC

peace and security architecture. SADC member States have made progress in mainstreaming gender initiatives, especially with regard to the training of trainers on gender-mainstreaming. In addition to that, SADC has initiated an advocacy strategy on informal cross-border trade, which provides a clear policy on areas of legislative action necessary for creating a favourable and enabling environment for women in trade, especially informal cross-border trade. We are now witnessing positive results, especially in the creation of new business opportunities, expanded markets, new business connections and capacity-building for business women.

SADC remains committed to efforts to promote the empowerment and advancement of women. However, despite some great steps towards that goal, women remain largely underrepresented in key decision-making structures and in peacemaking and peacebuilding processes. The region believes that, when given the opportunity, women will become active agents of change and play a critical role in the recovery and reintegration of families after conflict. Women are also instrumental in bringing about reconciliation and democracy in post-conflict societies. The recent award of the Nobel Peace Prize is a good example of that.

I would like to take this opportunity to stress that SADC attaches great importance to the creation of the new United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women, UN-Women. We express our complete availability to work towards the success of that new entity. SADC believes that UN-Women can play a vital role in helping developing countries acquire the skills required to enhance meaningful participation in decision-making and peacebuilding processes. Support of women's education in that respect will be an important prerequisite to achieving that objective.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate SADC's solid commitment to the full and effective implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). The international community as a whole has an obligation to women the world over, to ensure that their rights are protected and that their place in all aspects of the peace process is assured. It is their equal participation and their full involvement that will contribute to the effective maintenance and promotion of sustainable peace and security.

While progress has been registered in the implementation of the resolution, greater coordinated efforts are required to achieve the goal of its full implementation. In that connection, SADC welcomes the Council's adoption this morning of the presidential statement (S/PRST/2011/20).

The President: I now give the floor to the representative of Senegal.

Mr. Diallo (Senegal) (*spoke in French*): I would like to convey my delegation's sincere congratulations for the convening of this important debate on women, peace and security, which represents, Madam President, the crowning moment of your remarkable presidency of the Council for the month of October. I would like to thank the Secretary-General for his statement, as well as Mr. Lazarous Kapambwe, President of the Economic and Social Council, Ms. Michelle Bachelet, Executive Director of UN-Women, and Ms. Orzala Ashraf Nemat, representative of civil society, for their important contributions.

My delegation has a special interest in the topic, because resolution 1325 (2000) represented an enormous step forward in the protection of women and highlighted the importance of their role in all aspects of United Nations peacekeeping. Nonetheless, while it has remained far from being a cure-all, resolution 1325 (2000) has contributed, along with resolutions 1820 (2008), 1888 (2009) and 1889 (2009), to improving the normative framework for preventing gender-based violence and for protecting women against that scourge.

It should, however, be pointed out that, despite those praiseworthy efforts, persistent shortcomings have exposed thousands of women and girls to various types of barbaric abuse and atrocities. In fact, rape continues to be used as a weapon of war in certain conflict areas, and the ongoing existence of sexual and gender-based violence, even at the end of a conflict, represents an almost permanent threat to the security and health of that vulnerable group of the population. That is why the international community must firmly commit to vigorously combating impunity in order to guarantee the effective prevention of all forms of violence against women.

While welcoming the zero tolerance policy on sexual violence of the Secretary-General, we must, in addition, insist on the need to bolster the role of

women in conflict-prevention and resolution. Nevertheless, the poor results in that area have undoubtedly been due to the continuing low participation of women in the drafting of implementation strategies. I consider it crucial, therefore, to foster women's participation by reserving a key role for them in conflict-prevention policies, as well as policies on peacekeeping, peacebuilding and social and economic recovery. In that context, there must be a special focus on women's empowerment, which will require significant investment in education, training and maternal health.

In view of our considerable awareness of that dynamic process, my country has allocated a significant part of its budget to education and health, and on 14 May 2010, it adopted a law to establish full parity in all partially or fully elected bodies. In that manner, Senegal intends to ensure the effective participation of women in decision-making processes. To follow up on that law, a national gender-parity monitoring body was set up and will be officially inaugurated on 16 November.

Senegal has already adopted its national action plan to implement resolution 1325 (2000). Furthermore, it has sought to make a positive contribution to drafting the action plan of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the Dakar Declaration by focusing on the four following areas: first, effective participation of women in the peace process; secondly, protection of women and girls; thirdly, prevention of gender-based violence through preventive diplomacy and early warning systems, and fourthly, reconstruction and victim assistance.

It is certain that those significant national and regional level initiatives are welcome. However, they will achieve the desired success only if linked with an international dynamic inspired by the Security Council and based on coordinated efforts on the part of UN-Women and all of the other relevant bodies. There is also a need to improve women's involvement in peacekeeping operations by following up on the laudable efforts already carried out in that domain.

The effective prevention of sexual violence also requires stringent measures to vigorously combat the root causes of conflict exacerbation. Since there is an established link between what is known as low-level conflicts and wide-scale violence against women, I would like to launch an appeal for coordinated and focused action against the illicit trade in small arms and light weapons. In that regard, my delegation cherishes the hope that the diplomatic conference of 2012 will enable the adoption of a robust arms trade treaty.

Allow me to conclude by expressing my country's conviction that the efforts to be undertaken by 2015 will enable the Security Council to take stock at that time of the positive implementation of resolution 1325 (2000).

The President: There are still a number of speakers remaining on my list for this meeting. I intend, with the concurrence of the members of the Council, to suspend the meeting until 3 p.m. prompt.

The meeting was suspended at 1.10 p.m.